



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

Paul Wiedefeld
General Manager and CEO
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 5th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear General Manager Wiedefeld,

On behalf of the residents of Silver Spring, I urge you to reconsider eliminating Metrobus route J5, which runs between the Silver Spring and Twinbrook Metro stations during rush hour. Elimination of this route will significantly impact the daily commutes of many County residents who rely on it to get to work, school and home in a timely manner. It will also sever an inexpensive public transit tie between eastern and western Montgomery County.

As you know, many riders who rely on public transportation often do so out of financial necessity to avoid costlier options, including Metrorail. While WMATA has suggested alternative routes, including the Red Line, it is important to note that each alternative route would require additional fare payment, longer travel time, or route transfers, all of which directly affect a rider's commute. The Ride On route 5, for example, which also runs between the Silver Spring and Twinbrook metro stations, relies on local roads; this adds an additional and consequential 20 minutes to a rider's travel time.

The Washington, DC metropolitan area is well aware of the issues WMATA is currently contending with, including the lack of a reliable funding stream and a recalcitrant Congress. I appreciate your efforts to revamp our aging system, and I understand this often means making widely unpopular decisions. Nevertheless, it is important that WMATA listen to its customers and improve customer service to continue to rebuild ridership.

J5 riders have suggested alternatives to elimination of the route. I urge you and the Board to weigh the following proposed options:

- Reduction of hours of service and extension of the existent headway;
- Modification of route to include Wisconsin Avenue, helping alleviate crowding on the J2 & J3 routes;
- Coordination with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), which could take over the route in a manner similar to its operation of routes L8 and T2.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

Tom Hucker