



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E

Representing the communities of Burleith, Georgetown, and Hillandale

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February 18, 2020

Mr. Paul Wiedefeld
General Manager and CEO
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 5th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
PWiedefeld@wmata.com

RE: Metrorail Accessibility for Disabled Users

Dear Mr. Wiedefeld,

On February 3, 2020 ANC 2E held its regularly scheduled public meeting, which was properly noticed and attended by seven commissioners, constituting a quorum. At this meeting the Commission adopted the following resolution by a vote of (7-0-0) with regard to the above-referenced matter:

WHEREAS, 13% of residents in the District of Columbia have one or more disabilities that significantly impact their daily life, necessitating the presence of accessible public infrastructure,

WHEREAS, the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed 30 years ago and has yet to be fully implemented and complied with in the District, preventing the full inclusion and equality of disabled residents,

WHEREAS, the city's Metrorail system is one of the main modes of transportation for residents and visitors, but suffers from numerous accessibility issues that make it unusable or uncomfortable for riders with disabilities, and

WHEREAS, ANC 2E has received complaints from disabled residents about a lack of Metrorail accessibility, thereby affecting their access to transportation and quality of life.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ANC 2E requests that the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) investigates and resolves Metrorail access problems for users with disabilities, including:

COMMISSIONERS:

Kishan Putta, District 1 Joe Gibbons, District 2 Rick Murphy, District 3
Anna Landre, District 4 Lisa Palmer, District 5 Gwendolyn Lohse, District 6
Elizabeth Miller, District 7 Matias Burdman, District 8

1. Poorly scheduled elevator maintenance: WMATA should strategically schedule elevator maintenance so as to reduce impact on riders. In the past, users have reported regularly scheduled maintenance at Rosslyn station which unnecessarily puts all three elevators out of service at the same time, instead of leaving at least one for continued use while the others are being repaired.
2. A lack of real-time online announcements about elevator and escalator outages, both online and via audio on platforms/trains: Often notices about elevator and escalator outages are delayed or absent, preventing users from reaching their destinations. When present and reliable, these announcements can allow riders to adjust their trip in advance and avoid unnecessary inconveniences. Audio announcements on trains and platforms are especially helpful to users who have already boarded and may not be checking the WMATA website.
3. Broken emergency buttons on elevators: When an elevator is broken and users are stuck on the platform, they are encouraged to press the emergency button on the nearest elevator. However, when the elevators are broken, sometimes the emergency buttons break as well. There should be another method to call for help.
4. A lack of emergency-preparedness plans which include provisions for disabled riders: Users report a lack of publicly available information on whether Metrorail has prepared for the prospect of riders with mobility disabilities in emergency situations.
5. Inaccessible fare machines: Even the lowest-height fare vending machines have buttons that are unreachable to wheelchair users or people with other disabilities.
6. Unavailable station managers: Oftentimes the accessible gates to enter and exit Metrorail are out of service and station managers are nowhere to be found or contacted. Accessible gates should have a call button or another accessible way to contact station managers when they are not within sight.

Commissioners Anna Landre (2E04@anc.dc.gov) and Rick Murphy (2E03@anc.dc.gov) are the Commission's representatives in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard G. Murphy, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Rick Murphy
Chair, ANC 2E