

August 10, 2011

The Honorable Larry Gossett  
Metropolitan King County Council  
King County Courthouse



Dear Council Chair Gossett and members of the King County Council:

As elected officials representing every part of King County we are deeply concerned about the impacts the proposed transit service cuts will have to our cities, communities, economic health and quality of life in King County. We urge you to immediately adopt the proposed temporary \$20 congestion reduction charge by a supermajority of the Council.

We recognize the steps King County Metro has taken to cut costs and increase revenue to help close the budget gap created by the recession. Over the past two years, the agency has implemented scheduling efficiencies, raised fares by 80 percent, cut more than 100 positions, and their workers have accepted salary and wage freezes.

A strong transit system is critical to our region's economic prosperity. Additional cuts right now would be devastating to mobility in King County and would undercut our efforts to nurture a still-fragile economic recovery. Less transit means less access to commercial and employment centers, as well as more congestion, longer commutes, and reduced freight mobility on our already crowded streets and highways. If these cuts occur, nine million fewer trips will be taken on transit each year, and at least 4.5 million more trips will be taken by car. By adding over 15,000 cars to our busy roadways each day we will put more of our streets and highways in gridlock.

In contrast, the proposed temporary \$20 congestion reduction charge will help maintain the integrity of transit service throughout the County and give Metro the time to fully implement the performance improvements and costs savings measures identified by the King County Auditor's report, the Regional Transportation Task Force, and recently adopted in the 2011-2021 Metro Strategic Plan.

Your approval of the congestion fee would also give Metro the time to address long-term system design and funding issues, the use of performance measures to improve transit efficiency and productivity, social equity and geographic value. Meeting these objectives requires more than incremental reductions or additions to existing routes; instead time and resources, provided in part by this temporary fee, should be focused on completing a more comprehensive transit delivery redesign by 2013.

We recognize this is a difficult vote while we are still recovering from a tough recession. But we believe that all citizens will pay far more in transportation costs and time by the loss of dependable, frequent bus service. Not only will your vote help transit riders, it will save an estimated one million dollars that otherwise will have to be spent on an election.

The economic future of our region is at stake and we believe that there is no time for delay in taking this vote to preserve Metro service.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Albertson  
City Council Member  
City of Kent

Tony Anderson  
City Council Member  
City Of SeaTac

Dave Asher  
City Council Member  
City of Kirkland

Bruce Basset  
City Council Member  
City of Mercer Island

Brian Bennett  
Deputy Mayor & City Council Member  
City of Burien

Susan Boundy-Sanders  
City Council Member  
City of Woodinville

Fred Butler  
City Council Member  
City of Issaquah

Chris Eggen  
City Council Member  
City of Shoreline

Don Fiene  
City Council Member  
City of Lake Forest Park

Craig Goodwin  
City Council Member  
City of Black Diamond

Jessica Greenway  
City Council Member  
City of Kirkland

Mia Gregerson  
City Council Member  
City of SeaTac

Will Hall  
Deputy Mayor & City Council Member  
City of Shoreline

Dennis Higgins  
City Council Member  
City of Kent

Rob Holland  
Commissioner  
Port of Seattle

Dave Kaplan  
Mayor Pro Tem & City Council Member  
City of Des Moines

Lucy Krakowiak  
City Council Member  
City of Burien

Keith McGlashan  
Mayor & City Council Member  
City of Shoreline

Marlla Moon  
City Council Member  
City of Covington

Melissa Musser  
City Council Member  
City of Des Moines

Chris Roberts  
City Council Member  
City of Shoreline

Joshua Schaer  
City Council Member  
City of Issaquah

Verna Seal  
City Council Member  
City of Tukwila

Ralph Shape  
City Council Member  
City of SeaTac

Wayne Snoey  
City Council Member  
City of Covington

Gael Tarleton  
Commissioner  
Port of Seattle

John (Pat) Vache  
City Council Member  
Vice President, City Council  
City of Redmond

Shari Winstead  
City Council Member  
City of Shoreline

John Wright,  
City Council Member  
City of Lake Forest Park