



**Governance Work Group Releases Final Recommendations Report on Improving
WMATA Governance and Announces Regional Summit**
Swift Action Currently Underway

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The Governance Work Group (GWG), created by Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley and District of Columbia Mayor Vincent C. Gray to advance Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) governance reform, today released its final recommendations for improving regional coordination among the WMATA Board of Directors and establishing greater focus on long-term, high-level policy.

This report, which is the result of extensive collaboration among the GWG and stakeholders, recommends actions to be taken not only by the Board but also through the adoption of legislation at the jurisdictional level and a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed by the Transportation Executives in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia.

Swift action is currently underway on key governance reforms.

Governors O'Malley and McDonnell and Mayor Gray recently re-emphasized the call for a multi-year, regionally-focused chairmanship by encouraging the Board to re-elect Board Chair Catherine Hudgins for a second year. Legislation, which will establish Board member qualifications, reporting requirements and term limits, will be introduced in each of the three jurisdictions' upcoming legislative sessions. The GWG report also recommends the convening of an annual, regional summit with the Governors and Mayor, WMATA General Manager and Chief Executive Officer and Board Chair to review WMATA's progress and remaining challenges. **The first regional summit with Governors O'Malley and McDonnell and Mayor Gray is scheduled for January 13, 2012.**

The GWG recommends the following specific actions to increase accountability and transparency, improve regional coordination and focus the Board on high-level policy and long-term strategic planning:

- The Board should commit to a system of smaller committees with a stronger role for Committee Chairs;
- The appointing authorities should implement ridership and attendance expectations for Board members with annual reporting requirements;

- The entity responsible for a Board member’s compensation should submit an annual compensation letter to the Secretary or Director of Transportation;
- The Board Chair should serve at least two but no more than four consecutive years; and
- The Board should coordinate the budget planning process with the funding jurisdictions and establish a process in the Bylaws to develop a long-term strategic plan that is incorporated into the regular, ongoing activities of the Board and agency.

In order to establish a more coordinated appointment process for Board members and to ensure continuity on the Board, the GWG recommends transitioning to a system of staggered, four year terms with a maximum two term limit. In addition, the report calls for the development of a general, overarching Board composition concept and experiential qualification requirements for Board members, which will help further an effective and constructive balance of subject matter expertise.

Mr. Terry Bellamy, Director of the District Department of Transportation thanked the WMATA Board for their continued efforts to date: “Over the past year the Board has taken significant steps to improve governance, leadership and accountability at WMATA and these efforts remain ongoing. I look forward to continued cooperation with the Board and the Board’s Governance Committee as we move forward with this process and begin implementing these recommendations for advancement.”

Maryland Secretary of Transportation Beverley Swaim-Staley emphasized the importance of the Metro transit system to the region: “Throughout this process we have maintained an aggressive approach to strong concerns about WMATA performance and accountability. Input from stakeholders and others has been instrumental in identifying recommendations for more effective and efficient Board operations. Ultimately, our goal is to ensure the safety, security and reliability of the Metro system and its services. We must continue to work together to achieve these long term improvements if we are to successfully meet the region’s transit needs.”

Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton emphasized that while the GWG’s final report is an important step in the right direction “there remains much work to be done by all involved. We now move into the phase where we introduce and adopt legislation at the jurisdictional level, implement the various recommendations and provide for a recurring, meaningful review of the Board and agency’s performance.”

The final GWG Recommendations Report can be viewed here:

www.drpt.virginia.gov

www.mdot.maryland.gov

www.ddot.dc.gov