

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
DRAFT COMMITTEE REPORT**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

TO: All Councilmembers

FROM: Chairman Phil Mendelson
Committee of the Whole

DATE: December 3, 2019

SUBJECT: Report on PR 23-542, “Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019”

The Committee of the Whole, to which PR 23-542, the “Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019” was referred, reports favorably thereon, and recommends approval by the Council.

CONTENTS

I.	Background and Need.....	1
II.	Legislative Chronology.....	5
III.	Position of The Executive.....	5
IV.	Comments of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions.....	5
V.	Summary of Testimony.....	5
VI.	Impact on Existing Law.....	7
VII.	Fiscal Impact.....	7
VIII.	Section-By-Section Analysis.....	8
IX.	Committee Action.....	8
X.	Attachments.....	8

I. BACKGROUND AND NEED

On October 29, 2019, PR 23-542, the “Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019” was introduced by Chairman Mendelson. The purpose of PR 23-542 is to appoint Ms. Stephanie Gidigbi to replace Councilmember Jack Evans as a member of the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA Board) for a term to end June 30, 2021.

Ms. Gidigbi is a Ward 8 resident. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Communication from Kean University and her Master of Arts in Strategic Communication from Seton Hall University. Currently, Ms. Gidigbi serves as Director of Policy and Partnership – Healthy People Thriving Communities Program for the Natural Resources Defense Council. In this role she is responsible for advocating for transformative policy solutions to advance more

equitable outcomes for communities, and for elevating national discussions focused on issues of systemic inequities related to transportation, housing, environmental, and community development. Before working at the Natural Resource Defense Council, Ms. Gidigbi served as Director of Strategic Initiatives for the U.S. Department of Transportation. She was in charge of implementing priorities related to President Obama's and Secretary Anthony Foxx's *Economic Opportunity Agenda* to spur economic investment and create workforce opportunities. Ms. Gidigbi also advised Secretary Foxx on emerging transportation policies that improved access to economic opportunity. Prior to joining the U.S. Department of Transportation, Ms. Gidigbi worked at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as the New Jersey Director of Public Engagement for the Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force, which was a Task Force created by President Obama. Furthermore, she served as Chief of Staff to Mayor Eldridge Hawkins for the City of Orange Township in New Jersey, and as a Senior Legislative Assistant for Congressman Donald M. Payne. As a Senior Legislative Assistant, her portfolio included foreign affairs, appropriations, housing, and transportation policy issues. Ms. Gidigbi is a member of the American Planning Association, the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials, the Urban Land Institute, WTS International, and the American Public Health Association.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is a regional instrumentality that was created in 1967 through an interstate compact between the District of Columbia, the State of Maryland, and the Commonwealth of Virginia to plan, develop, finance, and operate a regional transportation system in the Washington metropolitan area.¹ Pursuant to the Compact, WMATA is governed by the WMATA Board. The purpose of the WMATA Board is not only to govern WMATA, but to develop policies and provide oversight for the management, maintenance, funding, and operation of the transportation system.

The WMATA Board is composed of eight principal directors (voting members) and eight alternate directors (non-voting members). The Signatories to the Compact – the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia – and the federal government are required to appoint two voting members and two non-voting members to the WMATA Board.² The members, both voting and non-voting, are appointed by the Council of the District of Columbia (representing the District), the Washington Suburban Transit Commission (representing Maryland), the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (representing Virginia), and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation (representing the federal government).³ Voting and non-voting members may be removed or suspended from office only as provided by the law of the Signatory from which he or she was appointed.⁴

In 2012 the Council approved the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Board of Directors Act in 2012 (WMATA Board of Directors Act).⁵ The purpose of the WMATA Board of Directors Act was to establish requirements for the appointment and service on the WMATA

¹ See generally Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact, approved November 6, 1966 (80 Stat. 1324; D.C. Official Code § 9-1107.01 *et seq.*) [hereinafter Compact].

² Compact § 5.

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ (D.C. Law 19-286; D.C. Official Code § 9-1108.11).

Board for members appointed by the Council.⁶ Furthermore, it required a District appointee: (a) to have experience on issues that would be useful to serving on the WMATA Board; (b) to be a patron of the services provided by WMATA; (c) to only serve two consecutive four-year terms; (d) to file an annual report with the Council each calendar year regarding his or her attendance record, and an affirmation that the member uses bus, rail, or paratransit services provided by WMATA; (e) to not have been an employee of WMATA within one year of appointment to the WMATA Board; (f) to serve at the pleasure of the Council; and (g) to adhere to the District’s Code of Conduct.⁷

Table 1: Membership of the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Resolution #	Appointing Authority	Position	Appointee	Term Expiring*
PR 23-542	District of Columbia	Principal Director	Stephanie Gidigbi	June 30, 2021
	District of Columbia	Principal Director	Vacant	June 30, 2023
R.19-152	District of Columbia	Alternate Director	Tom Bulger	June 30, 2020
R.22-606	District of Columbia	Alternate Director	Jeff Marootian	June 30, 2022
	Maryland	Principal Director	Michael Goldman (Vice-Chair)	N/A
	Maryland	Principal Director	Pete K. Rahn	N/A
	Maryland	Alternate Director	Kathy Porter	N/A
	Maryland	Alternate Director	Thomas Graham	N/A
	Virginia	Principal Director	Paul C. Smedberg (Chair)	N/A
	Virginia	Principal Director	Christian Dorsey	N/A
	Virginia	Alternate Director	Catherine Hudgins	N/A
	Virginia	Alternate Director	Matt Letourneau	N/A
	Federal Government	Principal Director	David Horner	N/A
	Federal Government	Principal Director	Steve McMillin	N/A
	Federal Government	Alternate Director	Devin Rouse	N/A
	Federal Government	Alternate Director	Anthony E. Costa	N/A

*Term expiration dates as provided by WMATA Board of Directors Act.

During the hearing, Ms. Gidigbi testified that her professional career, lived experience, and commitment to public transit, bus and rail, makes her qualified to serve as a member of the WMATA Board of Directors.⁸ Ms. Gidigbi highlighted her experience as a transit advocate, and told the Committee that she believes that it is critical to keep WMATA safe, reliable, affordable, and accountable to its users.⁹ Ms. Gidigbi’s professional career, to date, has given her the

⁶ Committee on Government Operations, Report on Bill 19-744, the “Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Board of Directors Act of 2012”, Page 2, November 8, 2012.

⁷ D.C. Official Code § 9-1108.11. WMATA Board members appointed by the Council must have experience in one of the following areas: transit planning, transportation planning, land use planning, transit or transportation management or other public-sector management, engineering, finance, public safety, homeland security, human resources, law, or knowledge of the WMATA region’s transportation issues.

⁸ Stephanie Gidigbi, Nominee, Testimony before the DC Council Committee of the Whole, 1, November 26, 2019.

⁹ *Id.*

opportunity to work with local, state, and federal government officials on public policy solutions that promote economic, social, and environmental benefits for communities.¹⁰ She added that her work with transportation leaders on policy issues while at the U.S. Department of Transportation will allow her to bring a new voice and perspective to the WMATA Board.¹¹ Ms. Gidigbi is confident that she will be an effective representative on the WMATA Board for the District.¹²

If appointed, Mr. Gidigbi is “committed to seeing WMATA work for the District of Columbia, riders, and the region.”¹³ In addition, she will work to bring a more equitable and sustainable transit system for the region, which includes a focus on bus rapid transit service and improved accessibility for people with disabilities and senior citizens.¹⁴ Ms. Gidigbi plans to advocate to keep WMATA affordable because she understands the disproportionate impact fare increases have on lower-income residents, especially residents that rely on bus service.¹⁵ Furthermore, she is committed to: advocating for the return of full late-night service; seeing improved community relations between transit law enforcement and riders of the system; ensuring the WMATA system is safe for riders and employees; identifying alternative strategies to address fare evasion; and to make the necessary investments to increase service and to improve reliability.¹⁶

Based on her impressive credentials, the Committee recommends the appointment of Ms. Gidigbi to serve on the WMATA Board. The Committee supports Ms. Gidigbi’s commitment to ensure proper investments are being made to meet the needs of all users no matter where they live or their economic status. Moreover, the Committee supports Ms. Gidigbi’s focus on bus service and equitable access to the WMATA system. This perspective will bring value to the WMATA Board. The Committee believes that Ms. Gidigbi’s expertise working on transportation public policy issues on the local and federal levels makes her more than qualified to serve on the WMATA Board.

Finally, the Committee believes Ms. Gidigbi meets the requirements to serve on the WMATA Board pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 9-1108.11 as she has experience in transit planning, transportation planning, land use planning, transit and transportation and public-sector management, and knowledge of the WMATA region’s transportation issues; and she is a regular user of the services provided by WMATA. For the reasons stated above, the Committee recommends adoption of PR 23-542.

¹⁰ See Stephanie Gidigbi, Nominee, Written Responses to the Committee of the Whole’s Prehearing Questionnaire, Page 4, November 22, 2019. (Attached to Report).

¹¹ *Id.* at 3.

¹² *Id.* at 4.

¹³ *Supra* note 8.

¹⁴ *Id.* at 4-5.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 2.

¹⁶ *Id.* at 2-4.

II. LEGISLATIVE CHRONOLOGY

- October 29, 2019 PR 23-542, the “Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019” is introduced by Chairman Mendelson.
- November 5, 2019 PR 23-542 is “read” at a Legislative Meeting and the referral to the Committee of the Whole is official.
- November 8, 2019 Notice of Intent to Act on PR 23-542 is published in the *District of Columbia Register*.
- November 8, 2019 Notice of a Public Hearing on PR 23-542 is published in the *District of Columbia Register*.
- November 26, 2019 The Committee of the Whole holds a public hearing on PR 23-542.
- December 3, 2019 The Committee of the Whole marks-up PR 23-542.

III. POSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE

Ms. Gidigbi is the Council’s appointee to the WMATA Board. The Executive provided no comment on Ms. Gidigbi’s appointment.

IV. COMMENTS OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONS

The Committee received no testimony or comments from any Advisory Neighborhood Commission on PR 23-542.

V. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Committee of the Whole held a public hearing on PR 23-542 on Tuesday, November 26, 2019. Copies of the testimony are attached to this report.

David Alpert, Executive Director, Greater Greater Washington, testified in support of PR 23-542. He testified that Ms. Gidigbi, as a regular transit rider, has a direct understanding of the needs and challenges facing residents that use WMATA. He also stated that she understands that WMATA cannot operate in a vacuum and not listen to the needs of residents.

Kirsten Allen, Deputy National Press Secretary, Presidential Campaign, testified in support of PR 23-542. Ms. Allen testified that Ms. Gidigbi has excellent communication skills and can be counted on to get the root of issues and offer up real solutions.

Maura Brophy, Director of Transportation and Infrastructure, Federal City Council, testified in support of PR 23-542. She testified that Ms. Gidigbi has the experience needed to be a strong champion of WMATA, prioritizing the needs of the system, and working to ensure that WMATA continues to serve its role as the backbone of our regional transportation network.

Taunya A. Melvin, Co-Pastor, New Solid Rock Church Ministries, Inc., testified in support of PR 23-542. Pastor Melvin testified that Ms. Gidigbi will be a great asset to the WMATA Board and will do an excellent job.

Lee Schoenecker, Public Witness, testified in support of PR 23-542. Mr. Schoenecker testified that Ms. Gidigbi should be appointed to the WMATA Board because her knowledge of transportation and climate change and resiliency issues, and her political experience.

Christopher A. Coes, Vice President, Land Use and Development, Smart Growth America, testified in support of PR 23-542. He stated that Ms. Gidigbi's national expertise navigating the challenges and opportunities facing public transit agencies today will bring a much-needed perspective to the WMATA Board.

Michael Sindram, Public Witness, did not testify in support of or in opposition to PR 23-542.

Nikko Bilitza, DC Jobs with Justice, did not testify in opposition to PR 23-542. He stated that the Committee should ensure that Ms. Gidigbi is committed to having the WMATA system work for workers and riders alike.

David Stephen, Political and Legislative Director, Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO, did not testify in support of or in opposition to PR 23-542.

Jossie Steinberg, Public Witness, testified in support of PR 23-542. Ms. Steinberg testified that she is eager for Ms. Gidigbi to serve on the WMATA Board as she will make sure that WMATA builds an inclusive process of stakeholders to make the system on the best in the country.

Brian Wivell, Political Organizer, ATU Local 689, testified in support of PR 23-542. He stated that ATU Local 689 is impressed with her qualifications and her past work on developing equitable transit systems. However, he testified that the Council should ask Ms. Gidigbi on her opinion on the issues of privatization and whether private contractors play a role in the future of WMATA.

Stephanie Gidigbi, Appointee, testified and answered questions from Chairman Mendelson and Councilmembers White, Silverman, and Allen regarding her background and experience as it pertains to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and her interest in serving on the WMATA Board.

Councilmembers White and Silverman asked Ms. Gidigbi about her thoughts regarding the privatization of WMATA operations. Ms. Gidigbi did not speak in favor of or against the privatization of WMATA operations. However, she promised to look into the impacts of

privatization on WMATA employees and the employees of the contractors. She also testified that she will ensure that all employees are treated fairly and equitably, and are provided proper wages and benefits.

Testimony Submitted for the Record

Anthony R. Foxx, Former Secretary U.S. Department of Transportation, submitted a statement in support of PR 23-542. He wrote that Ms. Gidigbi will be a valued addition to the WMATA Board because she is a collaborative leader, particularly on issues related to transportation equity, access, and economic inclusion. Secretary Foxx added that Ms. Gidigbi's work garnered the respect of colleagues, career staff, advocates, and elected officials across the nation.

Stephanie J. Jones, President, The Call to Justice Foundation, submitted a statement in support of PR 23-542. Ms. Jones wrote that Ms. Gidigbi has a sharp and creative mind, a fierce work ethic, and an extraordinary ability to transform ideas from concept into reality.

Todd Brogan, Organizer, ATU International, submitted a statement not in support of or in opposition to PR 23-542. His statement raised concerns of WMATA's privatization of its operations and its impact on District businesses and agencies.

The Committee received no testimony or comments in opposition to Ms. Gidigbi's appointment.

VI. IMPACT ON EXISTING LAW

Members appointed by the Council to serve on the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority are appointed pursuant to section 5 of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact, approved November 6, 1966 (80 Stat. 1324; D.C. Official Code § 9-1107.01(5)), and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Board of Directors Act of 2012, effective April 27, 2013 (D.C. Law 19-286; D.C. Official Code § 9-1108.11).

VII. FISCAL IMPACT

PR 23-542 will have no fiscal impact on the District of Columbia budget or financial plan. Pursuant to section 6 of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact, approved November 6, 1966 (80 Stat. 1324; D.C. Official Code § 9-1107.01(6)), members of the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority are not entitled to compensation.

VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

- Section 1 States the short title of PR 23-542.
- Section 2 Confirms the appointment of Stephanie Gidigbi as a member of the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority to serve a term to end on June 30, 2021.
- Section 3 Requires that a copy of the resolution, upon adoption, be transmitted to the appointee, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and to the Office of the Mayor.
- Section 4 Provides that PR 23-542 shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.

IX. COMMITTEE ACTION

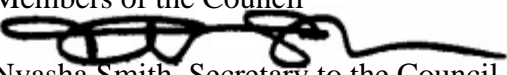
X. ATTACHMENTS

1. PR 23-542 as introduced.
2. Nominee's response to Committee questions.
3. Written testimony.
4. Legal sufficiency determination.
5. Committee Print for PR 23-542.

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20004

Memorandum

To : Members of the Council

From : 
Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

Date : November 04, 2019

Subject : Referral of Proposed Legislation

Notice is given that the attached proposed legislation was introduced in the Office of the Secretary on Tuesday, October 29, 2019. Copies are available in Room 10, the Legislative Services Division.

TITLE: "Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019", PR23-0542

INTRODUCED BY: Chairman Mendelson

The Chairman is referring this legislation to the Committee of the Whole.

Attachment

cc: General Counsel
Budget Director
Legislative Services


Chairman Phil Mendelson

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To appoint Ms. Stephanie Gidigbi as a member of the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia appoints:

Ms. Stephanie Gidigbi
Upsal Street, SE
Washington, D.C. 20032
(Ward 8)

as a member of the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, in accordance with section 5(a) of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact, approved November 6, 1966 (80 Stat. 1324; D.C. Official Code § 9-1107.01), and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Board of Directors Act of 2012, effective April 27, 2013 (D.C. Law 19-286; D.C. Official Code § 9-1108.11), replacing Councilmember Jack Evans, for the remainder of an unexpired term to end June 30, 2021.

33 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution,
34 upon its adoption, to the appointee, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and to
35 the Office of the Mayor.

36 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
37 the District of Columbia Register.

Stephanie Gidigbi

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Respected advocate with Local, State, and Federal experience, collaborating with diverse stakeholders to achieve consensus.
 - Effective collaborator and community organizer with strong political acumen working with underrepresented groups.
 - Accomplished project manager & recognized for strategic ability to execute multifaceted programs and projects.
-

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

- Advanced a \$90 million initiative created to focus on regional housing and transportation infrastructure investments that support community-driven integrated strategies to promote equity, better health outcomes, and climate resilience.
 - Leveraged \$75 million dollars of public and private investment to advance catalytic transportation projects in Atlanta, Baltimore, Baton Rouge, Phoenix, Indianapolis, and Richmond that cultivated philanthropic and business partnerships.
 - Selected by Center for Community Progress Leadership Institute at Harvard University to discuss best practices and foster innovative ideas in addressing vacant and abandoned properties for local cities following the housing and mortgage crisis.
 - Conducted extensive public outreach with civic groups, elected officials, and community leaders to develop the Hurricane Sandy rebuilding strategy for the \$8.6 billion dollar federal disaster assistance awarded to the State of New Jersey.
 - Provided technical assistance to local officials in the 10th Congressional District of NJ and secured over \$225 Million in federal funds through the Transportation Housing and Urban Development Appropriation for Fiscal Year 2008-2010.
 - Developed small business workshops at the local and federal level that train and support minority contract opportunities.
 - Completed Master's thesis on the public participation techniques, decision method process, and framework for evaluation, based on the New Jersey Transit Inner M& E Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Project.
-

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

NORTH STAR STRATEGIES, CEO

February 2018-Present

A strategic consultant firm that provides guidance to government and community leaders. Services include policy and political analysis, strategic planning and communications, issue campaigns, multi-faceted stakeholder engagement, and legislative/regulatory issue management. North Star helps leaders bring their dreams to life by transforming their visions into reality.

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL (NRDC)

Director of Policy and Partnership – Healthy People Thriving Communities Program

January 2018-Present

Identify cross-program policy opportunities that support the implementation of NRDC's strategic plan and integrated coordination of the Healthy People Thriving Communities Program.

- Advocate for transformative policy solutions & programs that advance more equitable outcomes for communities.
- Foster strategic partnerships to advance federal campaigns, coalition efforts, social equity, and climate justice issues.
- Direct the coordination of NRDC's infrastructure campaign, spearhead legislative action, and track administrative action.
- Elevate the national discourse on community-led strategies and issues of systemic inequities related to transportation, housing, environmental, and community development.
- Advocate for transformative policy solutions & programs that improves the social determinants of health, resilience, and equitable investment of communities.

Senior Adviser, Urban Solutions – Policy, Capacity, & Systems Change Director

Nov 2016-December 2017

Champion public policy solutions that promote economic, social, and environmental benefits for communities

- Manage national policy activities for the Strong, Prosperous, and Resilient Communities Challenge (SPARCC) initiative to support community driven outcomes in Atlanta, the Bay Area, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, and Memphis.
- Advance a "systems change agenda" that identifies systemic government inequities and strategically seeks to influence the way policies, programs, and the allocation of resources are made to create more equitable community outcomes.
- Identify and document best practices including model policies that address gentrification and displacement strategies.
- Coordinate NRDC's infrastructure priorities on housing, transportation, and environmental investment in communities.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Director of Strategic Initiatives

November 2015-Oct 2016

Implement priorities related to President Obama's and Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx' Opportunity Agenda that spur economic investment and create workforce opportunities, through Secretarial initiatives and program guidance.

- Advised the Secretary on emerging transportation policy that improved access to economic opportunity.
- Directed long-term strategic programs and projects initiated by the Office of the Secretary, including the departments LadderSTEP Transportation Empowerment Pilot that provides technical assistance to local officials by convening public and private entities to support game-changing community revitalization projects.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Deputy Director for Public Engagement

November 2013 – November 2015

Directed outreach and implemented engagement strategies for the Office of the Secretary and Undersecretary for Policy.

- Facilitated policy discussions, online dialogues, webinars, national summits, and stakeholder briefings.
- Convened stakeholders for White House events, roundtables, and federal regulatory & policy discussions.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

NJ Director of Public Engagement, Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force

March – October 2013

Collaborated with federal, state, and local officials as well as the private sector, non-profit, community, and philanthropic organizations to support and promote disaster recovery efforts in the State of New Jersey.

- Managed public engagement activities to inform and involve stakeholders in Presidential Task Force activities.
- Drafted policy documents, internal memoranda, and reviewed federal regulatory and statutory documents.
- Leveraged partnership opportunities and facilitate inclusive dialogue to support federal policy proposals.
- Assisted with the design and launch of Rebuild by Design, a multi-stage regional planning and design competition to promote resilience in the Sandy-affected region. Selected as one of CNN's Top 10 Best Ideas in 2013.

CITY OF ORANGE TOWNSHIP

Chief of Staff, Mayor Eldridge Hawkins

August 2010 – June 2012

Oversaw the Office of the Mayor; served as spokesperson and principal liaison for the Mayor and City of Orange.

- Developed and managed long-term strategic programs and projects initiated by the Office of the Mayor.
- Implemented policy directives, local ordinances, secured federal funding, and ensured legal compliance.
- Strengthened intergovernmental relationships with key stakeholders, business leaders and elected officials.
- Coordinated the City's housing and economic development strategy to revitalize distressed neighborhoods due to the foreclosure crisis by leveraging federal and state resources recognized by the New York Times.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Washington, District of Columbia

Senior Legislative Assistant, Congressman Donald M. Payne

November 2008 – August 2010

Portfolio included the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Appropriations, Housing, and Transportation Policy

- Counseled Member on Committee Issues, developed and advanced Member's legislative agenda.
- Secured Congressional funds - grants and appropriation for members' congressional district.

Legislative Assistant, Congressman Donald M. Payne

January 2007 – August 2008

- Managed special projects, coordinated advocacy campaigns, organized briefings, hearings and conferences.
- Conducted legislative research, prepared bill analysis, and developed recommendation for related votes.

EDUCATION

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

Master of Arts in Strategic Communication

South Orange, New Jersey
May 2013

KEAN UNIVERSITY

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Communication

Union, New Jersey
December 2006

AFFILIATIONS

American Planning Association (APA), Member | Urban Land Institute, ULI, Member |
Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO), Member | WTS International - DC Chapter, Member
New Jersey Democratic State Committee, Essex County Committee District Leader (2012-2013)
City of Orange Township, Planning Board Member (2010-2012)



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

Phil Mendelson
Chairman

Office: (202) 724-8032
Fax: (202) 724-8085

November 15, 2019

Ms. Stephanie Gidigbi
Upsal Street, SE
Washington, DC 20032

Dear Ms. Gidigbi,

Congratulations on being nominated for appointment to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA Board). As you know, the appointment is subject to confirmation by the Council. The Committee of the Whole has scheduled a public hearing on your nomination for **Tuesday, November 26, 2019 at 2:30 p.m. in Hearing Room 412**. Enclosed is a copy of the hearing notice. It is standard for the Council to submit questions to nominees. I request your response to the following questions no later than close of business Friday, November 22, 2019.

1. Please provide a copy of the Financial Disclosure Statement you filed with the Office of Campaign Finance or the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability. If you have not filed a Financial Disclosure Statement, please provide answers to questions 2-8 in lieu of that statement.
2. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business with the District Government in which you have a beneficial interest valued in excess of \$5,000, including publicly traded stock.
3. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business (including consulting) with the District Government from which you or your immediate family have received (or are receiving) income for services rendered in excess of \$1,000 during the past two years.
4. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting business with the District Government in which you or any member of your immediate family serves as an officer, director, partner, or agent. Also list the position(s) held, a brief description of the entity, and any other pertinent details.
5. Please provide the name of any lender and the amount of liability for each outstanding liability borrowed by you or any member of your immediate family in excess of \$5,000. Do not include loans from a federal or state insured or regulated financial institution, or from any business enterprise regularly engaged in the business of providing revolving credit or installment accounts.
6. Please list the location of all real property located in the District of Columbia in which you have an interest with a fair market value in excess of \$5,000.
7. Please list all professional and occupational licenses held by you.
8. Please list any professional organizations of which you are currently a member.

9. Please list all boards and commissions connected with the District government on which you are or have been a member, and include the term of service for each.
10. Please list any other boards (e.g. Boards of Directors of a non-profit) on which you are a member.
11. Do you have any outstanding liability for taxes, fees, or other payments to the District, federal, or other state or local governments, either contested or uncontested? If so, please provide documentation of attempts to pay the amount owed or to resolve the disputed claim.
12. Do you or any member of your immediate family have any interest, financial or otherwise, that may directly or indirectly pose a conflict of interest for you in performance of your duties as a member of the WMATA Board?
13. Please describe any local political activity (i.e. the District of Columbia local elections or campaigns) that you have engaged in over the past five years, including any campaign contributions to a local candidate or political action committee.
14. Are you registered with any local, state, or federal government to lobby? If so, list the jurisdiction(s) in which you are registered.
15. Do you understand how much time will be required of you to serve on the WMATA Board and do you commit to spend that time?
16. Why have you agreed to serve, and how do you plan to help the WMATA Board fulfill its role and mission during your time on the WMATA Board?
17. Please discuss any past and present experiences not already mentioned that you believe are relevant to support your appointment as a member of the WMATA Board.

At the November 26th hearing, you will be asked to make an opening statement indicating your interest in serving as a member of the WMATA Board. The testimony of persons interested in supporting your nomination is helpful but not necessary. Interested parties may call the Committee office to register to testify (724-8196) or, alternatively, may submit written comments to the Committee regarding your nomination via letter mail or e-mail (COW@dccouncil.us).

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me or Peter Johnson on my staff at (202) 724-8083.

Sincerely,



Phil Mendelson
Chairman

enc.

PM/pj

Stephanie Gidigbi

November 22, 2019

Chairman Phil Mendelson
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

RE: PR 23-542, Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

Thank you for the honor to be considered for an appointment to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA Board). As requested, please find my response to the council questions, per your letter dated November 15, 2019.

1. Please provide a copy of the Financial Disclosure Statement you filed with the Office of Campaign Finance or the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability. If you have not filed a Financial Disclosure Statement, please provide answers to questions 2-8 in lieu of that statement.

I have not filed a Financial Disclosure Statement, with the Office of Campaign Finance or the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability. As a result, I have provided answers to questions 2-8 in lieu of that statement.

2. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business with the District Government in which you have a beneficial interest valued in excess of \$5,000, including publicly traded stock.

N/A (Not Applicable) – There are NO business entities transacting any business with the District Government in which I would have a beneficial interest valued in excess of \$5,000, including publicly traded stock.

3. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business (including consulting) with the District Government from which you or your immediate family have received (or are receiving) income for services rendered in excess of \$1,000 during the past two years.

N/A (Not Applicable) – There are NO business entities transacting any business with the District Government from which I nor my immediate family have received (or are receiving) income for services rendered in excess of \$1,000 during the past two years.

4. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting business with the District Government in which you or any member of your immediate family serves as an officer, director, partner, or agent. Also list the position(s) held, a brief description of the entity, and any other pertinent details.

N/A (Not Applicable) – There are NO business entities transacting business with the District Government in which I nor any member of my immediate family serves as an officer, director, partner, or agent.

5. Please provide the name of any lender and the amount of liability for each outstanding liability borrowed by you or any member of your immediate family in excess of \$5,000. *Do not include loans from a federal or state insured or regulated financial institution, or from any business enterprise regularly engaged in the business of providing revolving credit or installment accounts.*

N/A (Not Applicable)

6. Please list the location of all real property located in the District of Columbia in which you have an interest with a fair market value in excess of \$5,000.

768 Upsal St SE; Washington, DC 20032

7. Please list all professional and occupational licenses held by you.

N/A (Not Applicable)

8. Please list any professional organizations of which you are currently a member.

- **American Planning Association (APA)**, Member
- **Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO)**, Member
- **Urban Land Institute, ULI**, Associate Member
- **WTS International - DC Chapter**, Member
- **American Public Health Associations (APHA)**, Member

9. Please list all boards and commissions connected with the District government on which you are or have been a member and include the term of service for each.

N/A (Not Applicable)

10. Please list any other boards (e.g. Boards of Directors of a non-profit) on which you are a member.

N/A (Not Applicable)

11. Do you have any outstanding liability for taxes, fees, or other payments to the District, federal, or other state or local governments, either contested or uncontested? If so, please provide documentation of attempts to pay the amount owed or to resolve the disputed claim.

No – I do NOT have any outstanding liability for taxes, fees, or other payments to the District, federal, or other state or local governments, either contested or uncontested.

12. Do you or any member of your immediate family have any interest, financial or otherwise, that may directly or indirectly pose a conflict of interest for you in performance of your duties as a member of the WMATA Board?

No – I do NOT have any members in my immediate family that have any interest, financial or otherwise, that may directly or indirectly pose a conflict of interest for me in performance of my duties as a member of the WMATA Board.

13. Please describe any local political activity (i.e. the District of Columbia local elections or campaigns) that you have engaged in over the past five years, including any campaign contributions to a local candidate or political action committee.

I am a registered voter in the District of Columbia that actively votes in local elections.

14. Are you registered with any local, state, or federal government to lobby? If so, list the jurisdiction(s) in which you are registered.

No – I am not registered with any local, state, or federal government to lobby.

15. Do you understand how much time will be required of you to serve on the WMATA Board and do you commit to spend that time?

Yes, I understand the approximate amount of time required to serve on the WMATA Board and commit to create the time needed.

16. Why have you agreed to serve, and how do you plan to help the WMATA Board fulfill its role and mission during your time on the WMATA Board?

In summary, I have agreed to serve as a principle member of the Board of Directors for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority WMATA because I am committed to seeing WMATA work for the District of Columbia, riders, and the region. As a transit advocate and user of the system, keeping Metro safe, reliable, affordable, and accountable to its users is critical to me. Professionally, I believe my experience at the United States Department of Transportation and working with Transportation leaders nationally will provide a new voice & perspective to the board.

17. Please discuss any past and present experiences not already mentioned that you believe are relevant to support your appointment as a member of the WMATA Board.

I have worked with leaders at every level of government to champion public policy solutions that promote economic, social, and environmental benefits for communities. I served as a political appointee for the Obama Administration at the U.S. Department of Transportation and U.S. Housing and Urban Development. During my tenure I elevated the role of transportation in revitalizing communities, creating pathways to jobs, expanding access to economic opportunity, and promoting a safety culture that considers all. I am proud of the various initiatives, we developed as part of the Administrations' Opportunities Agenda that provided technical assistance to local leaders, elevated best practices, and supported good public investment strategies. As a former Chief of Staff working for the Mayor of the City of Orange, NJ; I understand the challenges facing jurisdictions related to infrastructure, transportation, economic development, labor relations, and the importance of community outreach. As a former Capitol Hill staffer, I understand the role of the federal government and its impact to region. I am confident that I will be valued member of the WMATA Board and effective representative for the district.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss my qualifications in detail and address any additional questions by the Council, during the nomination hearing scheduled for Tuesday, November 26, 2019.

Sincerely,


Stephanie Gidigbi



The Washington, DC region is great >> and it can be greater.

**Testimony by David Alpert, Executive Director
PR23-542, Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019
November 26, 2019**

Chairman Mendelson and members of the Council,

Good afternoon. I am David Alpert, Executive Director of Greater Greater Washington, a volunteer-driven, nonprofit organization which focuses on transportation, housing, and public policy in the Washington region, and which advocates for an inclusive, diverse, growing region where all people can choose to live in walkable urban communities.

Greater Greater Washington is very enthusiastic about the choice of Stephanie Gidigbi to represent the District of Columbia on the WMATA board. As a regular transit rider, she has a direct understanding of the needs and challenges facing residents who travel on transit. As a Ward 8 resident, she has an understanding of the perspectives of other Ward 8 residents, whose voices are too often not heard sufficiently loudly.

As a former official of the US Department of Transportation, she understands the way local and federal collaboration is key to WMATA's success. As an employee of the Natural Resources Defense Council, among other things, she understands how vital our transit system is to saving humanity from the climate crisis.

As someone who has worked on community engagement and partnerships, she understands how WMATA cannot simply operate in a vacuum, untethered to and heedless of the mobility needs of residents. And, she has a deep understanding of the importance of bus service, something which until recently has not received attention from the WMATA Board or top management at the agency.

We appreciate the work of past District appointees to the board in securing regional funding for Metro. Now, there is much more work to be done. Ridership has continued to drop, bus speeds have declined, and weekend and night service is spotty. WMATA announces policies without letting residents and riders understand or weigh in on the tradeoffs.

The Board is insulated from public communication through a variety of means. Its public comment procedures deter communication and riders cannot directly contact their board members without their comments being routed to Customer Service. Even Councilmember Robert White was given the run-around when he tried to contact the board about conduct by the Metro Transit Police Department.

And, by the way, the agency has beat the drum for a more punitive approach to its low-income riders who cannot afford to pay the fare, an approach which costs more to enforce than it collects in fares and harms our most vulnerable populations.

We hope and look forward to working with Stephanie Gidigbi to push for changes in these areas.

We are enthusiastic about many provisions of the recently-released budget proposal including offering free transfers between rail and bus, a best practice among peer agencies and a long-time campaign of Greater Greater Washington's, as well as restoring some late-night service hours.

We are not supportive of a proposal to charge cash-dependent riders more for not having a SmarTrip as our unbanked residents cannot afford to pre-load multiple fares on a SmarTrip or purchase a weekly or monthly pass. We hope WMATA and the District will pursue low-income fare discount programs, something several councilmembers have expressed support for.

Finally, this is one of two appointments the Council must make to the board. As you consider your other appointment, we recommend you choose an official of the government such as the mayor's recommendation, Deputy Mayor Lucinda Babers. If that's not acceptable, other possibilities include current alternate Jeff Marootian or a member of the council such as Charles Allen.

There are a few reasons for this. First, as the mayor and council consider policies around transportation, they should feel as though Metro rail and bus are systems within their orbit of solutions. When none of the board members connected to the government, it can disconnect our government from advocating for policies that involve Metro.

For instance, Mayor Bowser proposed free fares on the DC Circulator this year, which this Council overturned. Some of the public reaction to the Circulator fares was to say, why Circulator? After all, Circulator is largely a downtown-focused bus system, but there are numerous Metrobus routes serving all neighborhoods. Fare discounts or free fares could be very equity-enhancing, but should not start with the Circulator.

The reason is simple: the Mayor had the power to do this on Circulator and couldn't similarly choose five Metrobus routes to make free on her own. If her deputy mayor or transportation director were board members, that doesn't immediately change this dynamic, but it would make establishing such a policy a much less indirect proposition.

We should not have an administration and council seeing WMATA as some force of nature outside their influence. Metro is a vital service for all of us which the District pays for. Yet the District has often not paid attention to Metro service or its policy implications.

Second, there are serious policy questions which the board deals with, especially around setting budget and service levels, and these are the kinds of decisions which traditionally we vest in our executive or legislative branches.

When setting fare policy, how does WMATA balance the relative needs of short-distance versus long-distance riders? Commuters versus off-peak riders? Rail versus bus? Low-income versus high-income? These are not questions which have definitive answers intrinsic to WMATA - they are policy questions, and very consequential ones.

Former Maryland board member Peter Benjamin used to say that WMATA would tend to think more about how to get trains and buses from one end of the line to the other than about the people who ride the trains or buses. The purposes of Metro is not to operate train and bus and paratransit vehicles, it is to provide mobility.

To take one example, the District used to advocate for keeping bus fares low because of the lower incomes of the average bus riders. When former member Jim Graham left the board and members like Mort Downey and Tom Downs arrived under a wave of pressure to have a board of "experts," the authority in short order raised bus fares 60% from \$1.25 in 2010 to \$2.00 today, versus rail base fare increases of only about 37% in that time period.¹ This was an equity disaster but a natural consequence of a board which was not focused on rider needs. The District and its board members did not advocate around off-peak and weekend rail service levels, issues of particular importance to District residents who are more likely than suburban ones to use Metro not only for commuting but for everyday transportation.

Finally, public officials are inherently more responsive to the public. The board needs to be more responsive rather than less. We appreciate Ms. Gidigbi's stated commitment to hear from riders as part of her role. A public official in the other seat would also enhance this.

We feel a board with Stephanie Gidigbi and the mayoral choice, Ms. Babers, or another official of the administration or legislative branch would be an excellent combination to represent the District. We urge the Council to approve Ms. Gidigbi's nomination as soon as possible.

Thank you, and I am happy to answer any questions.

1

https://www.wmata.com/about/board/meetings/board-pdfs/upload/012810_RESFY2010FareInc.FNLZ.pdf
and <https://www.wmata.com/fares/basic.cfm>

Testimony of Kirsten Allen

November 26, 2019

Committee of the Whole - Public Hearing

*Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi
Appointment Resolution of 2019*

Chairperson and members of the committee, my name is Kirsten Allen, I was born in DC almost 30 years ago, I am a graduate of Howard University, homeowner in northwest DC and am here today to proudly support the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019.

What I know about Metro is that it was created to, among other things, operate a balanced regional transportation system in the national capital area.

And what I know about the Board of Directors is that it determines agency policy and provides oversight for the aforementioned transit system.

What I don't see in the mission of both entities is Metro's role in placemaking, community building and the prioritization of the people who use it to get around the Nation's Capital.

What I know about Stephanie Gidigbi is that her divine purpose centers community and centers people.

As Metro goes through maintenance stalls and upgrades, as the system changes and expands – so does the lives of the people.

I can't think of anyone more concerned about the life, well-being and transformational impact of transportation on people and our communities than Stephanie Gidigbi.

From working under her leadership at the United States Department of Transportation to having the distinct honor of calling myself her friend – I have seen first hand her excellent communication skills and I know she can be counted on to get to the root of issues and offer up real solutions.

Stephanie is a person of high moral character, motivated by a strong sense of social responsibility. She has made countless contributions to our community and will be able to extend that reach on your board of directors.

She is a force. She is the manifestation of a saying my grandmother used to say – “any time you step in a room, you must leave it in better shape than you found it.”

So, Mr. Chairman, not only is the Board lucky to have her in your ranks but the users of this system, the people of this region and the communities that we live in are in great hands and can be confident that there's a voice on the board that will always make the people a priority.

I cannot think of anyone better suited for this role.

HEARING ON

**Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area
Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution
of 2019**

Chairman Phil Mendelson
Committee of the Whole

November 26, 2019

John A. Wilson Building

Testimony of Maura Brophy

Director of Transportation and Infrastructure, Federal City
Council

Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Maura Brophy and I am the Director of Transportation and Infrastructure with the Federal City Council, a nonprofit civic organization that works to advance projects and policies that are good for the future of the District.

On behalf of the Federal City Council, I'm testifying before you today to express strong support for the appointment of Stephanie Gidigbi to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

The Federal City Council has a long history of supporting Metro, including playing a critical role in advocating for the original buildout of the system. More recently, the organization called for a set of reforms intended to set Metro, the backbone of our regional transportation network, on a sustainable path. This work included helping to secure dedicated funding for the system in 2018, while simultaneously calling for a set of improvements to Metro's governance structure.

Specifically, the Federal City Council's position is that board members should have clear fiduciary responsibility to Metro and should put the interests of the system first. To this end, the Federal City Council has called for board members to be chosen based on a set of professional experience and qualifications and should understand, but not be directly involved in, the regional political landscape.

The Federal City Council believes that Ms. Gidigbi possess the qualifications and experience that Metro needs in a board member, and is well suited to serve on the Metro board.

I first had the chance to meet Ms. Gidigbi in her previous role as a political appointee in the Obama Administration, where she advanced the administration's economic opportunity agenda at the U.S. Department of Transportation. Prior to serving at USDOT, she was appointed as the New Jersey Director for Public Engagement, overseeing the Hurricane Sandy Taskforce, under the leadership of the U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to support the federal disaster response in the region. In her current role with the Natural Resources Defense Council, Ms. Gidigbi coordinates efforts to advance plans for 21st Century infrastructure investments and to elevate social system change strategies. Ms. Gidigbi is a champion of solutions that promote economic, social, and environmental benefits for communities and has deep experience working with elected, business, and community leaders. It is this experience that puts Ms. Gidigbi in a position to be a strong champion of Metro, prioritizing the needs of the system, and working to ensure that Metro continues to serve its role as the backbone of our regional transportation network.

The Federal City Council applauds the thoughtful nomination of Ms. Gidigbi by the Chairman and hopes that this appointment will set a precedent for future nominations, both in the District and in other appointing jurisdictions.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify on Stephanie's behalf today.

Taunya A. Melvin Co-Pastor
1203 Ashleigh Station Court
Bowie, MD 20721
202-494-7701

Recommendation for Stephanie Gidigbi
To the Board of Directors of WMATA
Tuesday, November 26, 2019

I have been riding the subway since the red line was first established. In riding the bus and the subway for such a long time one may wonder do the people that make the decisions, set policies, create the budget and hours of operation really ride the transit system on a regular basis? One may also question how much first-hand knowledge do the powers that be have and do they really know how their decisions affect those who ride frequently and on a daily basis? My hope is the answer is yes. That's why I highly recommend Stephanie Gidigbi as a member of the WMATA Board.

Not only does she have the experience with working on projects for transit systems in Atlanta, Baltimore, Baton Rouge, Phoenix, Indianapolis, and Richmond, she also is a resident of the District of Columbia and rides the transit systems daily when not traveling out of town. It is this type of boots on the ground experience, that will help her to shape her opinions and contributions for what the transit system does well and what it needs.

With this firsthand knowledge she will be able to express what should be in place because she sees what goes on throughout the system firsthand. With experience both in this city and her research concerning other underserved transit systems in other cities, she will be able to share best practices that will make our system even better.

I've known Ms. Gidigbi for a little over two years because we worship at the same church. Ms. Gidigbi doesn't hesitate to give a helping hand when needed and spearheads projects that will allow our church to grow and bring us to the 21st century. She has a great compassion for humankind and has a determination to do all she can do to help everyone grow and flourish. One thing I can say about her is that she doesn't make hasty decisions. She calculates what is involved and when she does decide you can be assured that she has done her homework and her responses come with great thought and can be validated. Without a shadow of doubt, I know her contributions will be innovative, researched and rich in information.

She will be a great asset to the WMATA Board, and I know she will do an excellent job.

Sincerely,



Co-Pastor Taunya A. Melvin

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF STEPHANIE GIDIGBI AS A DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Mr. Chair, members of the District of Columbia Council. My name is Lee Schoenecker, I am a long-term resident of the District of Columbia, and I live at 5543 30th Place, NW. I am testifying in support of Stephanie Gidigbi's appointment as a District of Columbia Representative to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

My introduction to, and knowledge of, Ms. Gidigbi came about through her participation in the April, 2016 third annual day-long Regional Livable Communities Forum sponsored by the nationwide Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division of the American Planning Association. That particular Forum was held in Phoenix, Arizona and I was one of the main organizers. It had 40-50 participants and included representatives from close to 20 large metropolitan planning organizations from across the country.

As the work of regional planning agencies across the country is influenced and significantly financed by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), we invited Ms. Gidigbi to talk about USDOT programs, particularly the Ladders of Opportunity Transportation Empowerment Pilot (LadderSTEP) initiative. She led and managed this program, working directly for then DOT Secretary Foxx.

(Parenthetically, it is my understanding that this particular program grew out of Secretary Foxx's experience as the former Mayor of Charlotte, witnessing the negative impacts of highway infrastructure and the importance of public transit in bridging the divide.)

This Ladder Step Pilot Program, among other things, carried out pilot demonstrations in several cities, including Phoenix. And since our 2016 Forum was in Phoenix, Ms. Gidigbi discussed this particular pilot program as well as other U.S. DOT programs of interest to the Forum's participants. Her participation was excellent. She was very knowledgeable, candid, and provided various insights.

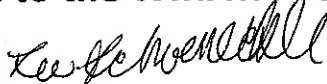
While I was very impressed by Ms. Gidigbi's participations in our April 2016 Forum in Phoenix, I did not know her either before the Forum, nor have I kept in contact with here since 2016. Therefore, before I decided to endorse Ms. Gidigbi for the WMATA position, and to check out my highly positive instincts about her in that Forum, I contacted two individuals who were at the Forum. These are also two individuals for whom I have had a very high regard for some years.

They both have known Ms. Gidigbi and her work much longer than I have. In my conversations with them, they both gave her very, very high marks.

In closing, as a general rule I am pretty much of a "cup half-full" type of person. And in this case, as Ms. Gidigbi has been deeply involved in transportation; as she has a varied political and other directly-related subject matter experience such as in climate change and resiliency; and, as she lives in Ward 8, not only is my cup half full, but it is brimming to the top.

I strongly recommend she be appointed to the WMATA Board of Directors.

Thank you.


Lee Schoenecker, AICP

2.



November 25, 2019

Hon. Phil Mendelson
Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Letter of Support for Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit

Dear Chairman Mendelson and members of DC City Council:

On behalf Smart Growth America, I am excited to write this letter in support of Ms. Stephanie Gidigbi's appointment to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Agency. Smart Growth America is a national non-profit that envisions a country where no matter where you live, or who you are, you can enjoy living in a place that is healthy, prosperous, and resilient. We empower communities including transit agencies through technical assistance, advocacy, and thought leadership to realize our vision of livable places, healthy people, and shared prosperity.

Ms. Gidigbi not only shares this vision, but for the last fifteen years she has dedicated her career to building national support for affordable and sustainable public transportation and mobility options. She is a nationally recognized leader in advancing public policy solutions and partnerships that leads to equitable development outcomes. She is also a champion for social equity, climate justice and economic prosperity for marginalize and disadvantage communities.

Ms. Gidigbi's national and on-the-ground technical expertise navigating the challenges and opportunities facing public transits agencies today will bring a much-needed perspective to the WMATA Board of Directors.

More importantly, Ms. Gidigbi is a woman of the highest professional and personal integrity and we, Smart Growth America, are pleased to provide this letter in support for her appointment to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metro Area Transit Agency. We would appreciate the Council's earliest consideration of this nomination for confirmation. Please do not hesitate to contact me should the Council require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher A. Coes".

Christopher A. Coes
Vice President
Smart Growth America
ccoes@smartgrowthamerica.org

TESTIMONY OF NIKKO BILITZA
ORGANIZER, DC JOBS WITH JUSTICE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
PUBLIC HEARING

PR 23-542, Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie
Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019
NOVEMBER 26, 2019

Chairman Mendelson and members of the DC Council, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Nikko Bilitza and I am an organizer with DC Jobs With Justice (DC JWJ). DC JWJ is a coalition dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights of working people and supporting community struggles to build a more just society.

I am testifying today because right now is a particularly important time in the history of WMATA. It has been four decades since there has been a strike within the WMATA system. Right now, 150 workers at Cinder Bed Road have been on strike for 35 days, with no resolution in sight. This strike is taking place because WMATA has made the unwise decision to privatize bus operations at this facility and routes *and* failed to hold the company accountable for its responsibility to operate the transit lines.

This strike demonstrates what is at stake in the WMATA system. On August 12, 2018, the Washington Post ran a story with the headline "Amid push for privatization, Metro outsources portion of bus operations." The article discusses the \$89 million contract that Transdev received to run the Cinder Bed Road bus facility in Lorton, VA. It also states:

The Transdev deal also could forecast what is to come as Metro considers privatizing some operations of phase II of the Silver Line extension when it opens in 2020. Metro, for example, could give a private company responsibility for operating the six new stations and performing track maintenance on the new stretch of the line, which will pick up at Wiehle-Reston East and continue past Dulles International Airport and into eastern Loudoun County, for a total of 23 miles of new track.

Indeed, this could forecast what is to come in metro privatization. Right now, the Northern Bus Garage on 14th Street is closed and renovations are starting. If this follows the same pattern as Cinder Bed Road, will workers there face the same fate? Will workers on the completed Silverline?

Wages at Cinder Bed Road are \$12 less than for other WMATA workers. Benefits are negligible, including healthcare with a high deductible that keeps the burden on workers to pay for care out of pocket. Right now, a handful of workers in one corner of the DC suburbs are affected by this privatization. But it is the first step on a journey that could affect nearly 10,000 workers in our region.

As many people know, jobs on Metrorail and Metrobus have been a true pathway to the middle class for District residents. This includes Black residents, immigrants, those without the opportunity to go to college, and more. The maintenance of jobs within Metro that meet the needs of District residents seeking family sustaining jobs must be a priority for the DC Council and our representatives on the WMATA board.

While I have the opportunity to address you, Chairman and members of the DC Council, I encourage you to engage directly and encourage WMATA to get Transdev to bargain in good faith, starting with enforcing the revenue agreement. WMATA's actions are enabling Transdev to leave workers and riders in limbo.

You are also here to hear comments about and by Stephanie Gidigbi. From her record, I am not here to raise particular concerns about her appointment. However, please take this opportunity ask her to commit to participating in an active way that ensures the WMATA system works for workers and riders alike:

- Oppose privatization of WMATA operations which saves money on the backs of workers who have fewer and fewer opportunities for middle class jobs that do not require an advanced degree and who are disproportionately workers of color.
- Ensure WMATA and contractors – to the extent they exist – bargain in good faith with ATU 689 and any other local representing workers in the system.
- Create long-term financial planning that fully reflect the costs of labor, operations, maintenance, growth, and other needs for the Metro system.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I am happy to answer any questions.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

On October 24th - over one month ago - Metrobus drivers at WMATA's Cinder Bed Road bus garage in Lorton, Virginia, went on strike. Like most Metro workers, they are union members of ATU Local 689. Unlike most Metro workers, they are employed by a private contractor, Transdev. They are paid nearly \$12 less than hour than public sector workers, with negligible benefits.

After eight months of sluggish negotiating, Cinder Bed Road members went on strike to protest frequent unfair labor practices by Transdev. WMATA has taken minimal action to get strikers back to work. In fact, WMATA appears to be siding with the company, refusing to issue penalties for Transdev's inability to deliver any service on 15 routes.

This strike is important because of the 100+ workers directly affected. It is also critical because it could be the beginning of broader privatization plans for the WMATA system, including the Silver Line Extension and other Metrobus garages. In DC proper, there is concern that once the Northern Bus Garage on 14th Street reopens they will attempt to privatize those jobs as well. **WMATA jobs have historically been middle class jobs with economic security for workers. The treatment of Cinder Bed Road workers shows that opportunity could be in jeopardy.**

PLEASE ATTEND TODAY'S HEARING:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY STEPHANIE GIDIGBI APPOINTMENT RESOLUTION OF 2019

Today, the Committee of the Whole will hear testimony regarding one of DC's appointees to the WMATA Board. Board members oversee the entire system, including the well-being of workers and riders. **Please attend today's hearing, make opening statements in support of Cinder Bed Road workers and WMATA employees, and question the appointee.**

SAMPLE OPENING STATEMENTS

- ❖ I support the preservation of all WMATA jobs as good careers that provide family-sustaining wages and benefits in our high-cost region.
- ❖ WMATA should do more to get Transdev to bargain in good faith, starting with enforcing the revenue agreement. WMATA's actions are enabling Transdev to leave workers and riders in limbo.
- ❖ The DC representative to the WMATA board should reflect the values of our city for the whole regional operation. That includes values like equal pay for equal work.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- ❖ What is your position on the privatization of WMATA operations?
 - How have you seen privatization be successful or fail in other systems with which you are familiar?
 - Would you vote to privatize/contract out operation of the Silver line, Northern Bus Garage on 14th Street, or other Metrorail or Metrobus operations?
- ❖ In your comments to the Council you state that during your time in the Obama Administration you "elevated the role of transportation in revitalizing communities, creating pathways to jobs, expanding access to economic opportunity."
 - Do you believe WMATA's current actions or inactions regarding the Cinder Bed Road strike meet those goals?
 - If you were on the board now, what role would you advocate for WMATA to pursue at this time?

SHOW SUPPORT FOR GOOD JOBS AT WMATA

Please use your platform to show your support for Cinder Bed Road workers and all ATU 689 members!

- ❖ Include a picture in solidarity with striking workers in your email, twitter, or other communications with constituents
- ❖ Send a letter to WMATA calling on them to take responsibility for the strike, reconsider privatization, and to take all necessary action to get Transdev to settle a fair and just collective bargaining agreement
- ❖ Prepare and sign a Council resolution to the same effect

Jocelyn Steinberg
1100 First Street SE
Apt. 1020
Washington, DC 20003
Jossie.steinberg@gmail.com
770.380.2829

November 26, 2019

Chairman Phil Mendelson
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

RE: PR 23-542, Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

I am testifying in support of Stephanie Gidigbi's nomination to the Board of Directors for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

As a District resident and a daily WMATA user, I am eager to have her on the WMATA Board. I know she will bring an unmatched level of expertise and oversight. Every day she will be helping to make sure that WMATA builds an inclusive process of stakeholders to continue to make our system one of the best in the country.

We know in the District that housing and transportation costs combined account for approximately half of the average household budget. Additionally, the District's number one source of pollution is transportation emissions. This has a disparate effect on public health. I have known Stephanie through our work at the Natural Resources Defense Council. She is a leader. During the past two years, I have seen how she builds a collaborative team that works to address transportation equity, access, and economic inclusion. What particularly excites me about her nomination is that I know the City Council is signaling that we want WMATA and our transportation system to better address carbon emissions increase quality of life.

Stephanie will be simply an advantage to the WMATA Board. Her leadership will be felt in the entire District.

Sincerely,

Jocelyn Steinberg

**“On PR23-542, Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019”**

Brian Wivell, Political Organizer
Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 689

Thank you all for the opportunity to speak with you today. I am here as a representative of the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 689. We have represented transit workers in this region for over 100 years, including nearly 13,000 workers and retirees of the WMATA system. We've helped provide a pathway to stable middle-class careers for decades based on the willingness of our members to fight for what they deserve.

We are glad to see that the Council is prepared to appoint a new member to the WMATA Board. The current board is incapable of fulfilling its important oversight and leadership functions when it is not at its full capacity.

We come here today with a message that we would like to share with the Council and the prospective future board member, Stephanie Gidigbi. We are very impressed with her qualifications and past work on developing equitable transit systems, a goal that this union strongly shares.

ATU Local 689 is currently in an existential fight with WMATA management that compels us to be here today. This union views the fundamental question faced by the WMATA Board as whether or not to run a *public* transit system at all. That sounds silly or hyperbolic, but it is the core issue facing the board. Over the last few years, WMATA attacked late night service in favor of subsidizing Lyft, a ride-share company that has a business model that requires the destruction of public transit in order to be profitable. We have also seen WMATA sell off the operations contracts for an entire bus garage to low-bid, bad faith actors like Transdev. Public transit systems and profit-seeking do not work well together. In fact, the repeated economic failures of Capital Transit and DC Transit, both private companies, are the reason WMATA exists in the first place. There is no doubt in my mind that General Manager Paul Wiedefeld intends to sell off other parts of WMATA, including the Silver Line, to low bid contractors that drive down wages, cut costs on maintenance, and disregard public safety all to save a few bucks.

We have over 120 members employed by Transdev that have been on strike at WMATA's Cinder Bed Bus Garage in Lorton, Virginia for more than 34 days. They have gone without paychecks and health insurance for nearly this entire time. But they're sticking together for one simple reason, they know they deserve equal pay for equal work. If this path towards privatization continues, more strikes like this are inevitable.

So we ask this Council to ask Ms. Gidigbi and all future candidates for their full opinions on the issues of privatization and whether private contractors play a role in the future of WMATA. Once again thank you for the opportunity to speak with you all today.

Testimony of Stephanie Gidigbi

for the Board of Directors of the WMATA Appointment Resolution of 2019

Tuesday, November 22, 2019

Thank you, Chairman Mendelson and all the members of the District of Columbia City Council, for the privilege to be nominated to serve as a principal member of the Board of Directors for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) that determines agency policy and provides oversight for the funding, operation, and expansion of the regions transit facilities within its jurisdiction.

My name is Stephanie Gidigbi and I am a dedicated servant leader who has worked at every level of government, championing public policy solutions that promote economic inclusion, foster social equity, and ensure environmental benefits for ALL communities to thrive. **As a transit advocate and user of the WMATA system, keeping Metro safe, reliable, affordable, and accountable to its users is critical to me.**

I began my career working on Capitol Hill getting paid only once a month and barely having enough to cover my Metro and bus rides home. The long days and short nights, depending on the vote schedule at work, meant the difference between a one- or two-hour commute depending on the time due to service frequency. Back then, I never imagined I would have the opportunity to sit on the board that makes the decisions for hundreds of thousands of riders like me. So, it is truly an honor and I am humbled by the opportunity.

I have agreed to serve as a principal member of the Board because I am committed to seeing WMATA work for the District of Columbia, riders, and the region. **I believe my professional career, lived experience, and commitment to public transit both bus and rail, makes me an exceptional candidate.**

I had the privilege to serve as a political appointee for President Barack Obama at the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. During my tenure I elevated the role of transportation in revitalizing communities, creating pathways to jobs, expanding access to economic opportunity, and promoting a safety culture that considers all.

I am proud of the various initiatives, we developed as part of the Obama Administrations' "Opportunities Agenda" that provided technical assistance to local leaders, elevated best practices, and supported good public investment strategies. As a former Chief of Staff working for a Mayor who focused on inclusive growth strategies, I understand the challenges facing jurisdictions related to infrastructure, transportation, economic development, labor relations, and the importance of community outreach. As a former Capitol Hill staffer, I understand the role of the federal government and its impact to this region.

Budget Oversight

As a District homeowner and tax payer, I believe it is important that WMATA focuses on controlling operation cost growth and imperative that the District pays NO more than its fair share to ensure dedicated funding for the system. **I commit to advocating for effective fiscal oversight, transparency, and accountability.** I look forward to working with the DC Council and Mayor Bowser's Administration on the FY2021 WMATA Budget process, including more intentional public outreach, to understand the implications of the proposed budget and inform the budget adoption slated for March 2020.

Affordability

I am encouraged by several aspects of the budget that improve the affordability of system; such as the \$2 weekend flat fare to increase ridership and full transfer discount (\$2.00) between Metrobus and rail and vice versa that encourages system integration.. Given the 3% operation growth cap by the other jurisdictions, I understand there are limited options that don't include a fare increase and no one wants to pay more for less service. I look forward to reviewing the equity impact of rail increase.

I recognize lower-income residents disproportionately take the bus and even a nominal increase of bus fare could have exponential impact because an additional \$.10 for each stop commuting between home, school, work, grocery store, adds up to hundreds of additional dollars over the course of year for riders who can barely afford the current cost of living for the region.

Late Night Service

Another priority area highlighted in the budget includes the restoration of late-night Metrorail service. As proposed, Metro would provide additional operation and service hours without jeopardizing maintenance and capital work, which is a great step forward to restoring late-night hours. However, it does not restore service back to the original hours prior to the SafeTrack service changes. **I am committed to advocating for true late-night service**, in addition to exploring alternative options that address the needs of District residents, late-night workers, and late-night business patrons.

Safety

This year marks the 10-year anniversary of the deadliest crash in WMATA history and 4 years since the deadly smoke incident. I believe that no one ever wants to leave home scared that their commute or job may end their life. I remain committed to making safety a priority for riders and employees of the system. I am encouraged to see the proposed budget prioritize rehabilitation and replacement of assets to improve passenger and worker safety.

I want to thank Councilmember Robert C. White Jr and Councilmember Charles Allen for hosting the joint public oversight roundtable on the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD)'s policing practices and the implication on communities of color, two weeks ago. **I too share a commitment to seeing improved community relations between transit law enforcement and riders of the system.** I was encouraged to learn about the implicit bias, human trafficking, cultural diversity and intellectual disability development trainings offered to transit officers. I look forward to exploring some of the recommendations shared during the hearing, including a civil police complaint board for the MTPD as part of the WMATA compact, increasing transparency, providing public education and access to information related to the complaint process, arrests, use of force, and data collection.

The more recent public incidents of excessive forces and over-policing of Metro riders' correlates to the enforcement of fare compliance.

Fare Compliance

The challenge of fare compliance is not unique to the system. I look forward to working with other leaders, locally and nationally, to identify alternative strategies to address the challenges of fare evasion while eliminating the criminalization of poverty. This includes modernizing the fare collection system and expanding fare product offerings that address the challenges of unbanked persons who must rely on the system to work for them.

WMATA Leadership

Over the last few years, Metro has seen its challenges and I believe the current General Manager and CEO of WMATA, Paul Wiedefeld, has improved the safety culture and effectively provided financial management of the system. Under his leadership, Metro secured dedicated capital funding, received a clean, on-time financial audit, and made significant strides in upgrading and rehabilitating the system's aging infrastructure. I look forward to working with Paul and other members of the board to ensure Metro becomes the example for safety, innovation, and more equitable transit solutions that support 21st Century Investment.

21st Century Investment

As we welcome a new decade, I look forward to more equitable transit solutions that moves the region forward without leaving those most in need behind—with a focus on bus rapid transit service, last mile solutions for riders, and improved Metro accessibility resources for people with disabilities and senior citizens.

As the Nation's Capital, I believe the region is well positioned to advocate federally for robust public investment in transit and address the capital needs of the system while ensuring that operating subsidy growth stays below the three percent cap. This could include more support for transit-oriented joint development, electrification of WMATA bus fleet, alternative use of underutilized parking, optimizing non-fare revenues, including advertising and monetizing assets. I look forward to working with the other WMATA board members to explore how WMATA can attract more customers by leveraging its capital investments to increase service needs more cost-efficiently, improve safety and reliability.

In closing, I want to thank the Council for their leadership to date. I welcome the continued dialogue on visioning a more equitable and sustainable transit system for the region. I am confident that I will be a valued member of the WMATA Board and an effective representative for the District. Thank you again for your consideration.

November 20, 2019

Chairman Phil Mendelson
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

RE: PR 23-542, Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019

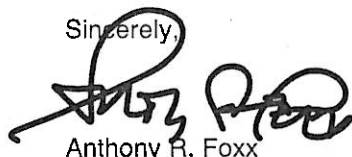
Dear Chairman Mendelson,

I am writing in support of Stephanie Gidigbi's nomination to the Board of Directors for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). During my tenure as Secretary for the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), Stephanie distinguished herself as a collaborative thought leader; particularly on issues related to transportation equity, access, and economic inclusion.

Stephanie consistently demonstrated strong moral character, possessed a solid work ethic, and selflessly served with integrity. She resourcefully tackled barriers and elevated best practices that supported public investment strategies. As a result, Stephanie garnered the respect of colleagues, career staff, advocates, and elected officials across the nation

Stephanie exhibits objective foresight to address impending conflicts. She possesses sector specific insight and ability to provide critical oversight. A dedicated community advocate, Stephanie is passionate about improving the lives of others. Her success comes from a steadfast dedication to excellence and commitment to service. I am confident that Ms. Gidigbi will become a valued addition to the WMATA Board.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony R. Foxx', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Anthony R. Foxx



November 26, 2019

Via Email: PJohnson@dccouncil.us
The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chair
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Nomination of Stephanie Gidigbi to the WMATA Board of Directors

Dear Mr. Mendelson:

I write to enthusiastically support Stephanie Gidigbi's appointment to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

I worked closely with Stephanie at the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), where she was the Deputy Director of Public Engagement and later, Director of Strategic Initiatives and I was Deputy Chief of Staff, Senior Counselor to the Secretary, and Chief Opportunities Officer. Upon meeting Stephanie, I was immediately impressed with her intelligence, enthusiasm, and commitment to transportation equity. I quickly learned that she also has a sharp and creative mind, fierce work ethic, and an extraordinary ability to transform ideas from concept into reality.

These qualities, combined with Stephanie's exceptional interpersonal skills and profound understanding of the myriad ways transportation affects people and communities, led me to embrace her as my "right hand" in carrying out Secretary Anthony Foxx's cutting-edge Ladders of Opportunity agenda, a top USDOT priority during the Obama Administration.

As USDOT's Director of Strategic Initiatives, Stephanie was instrumental in ensuring the highly successful outcomes of numerous Secretarial priorities, including Ladders Transportation Empowerment Pilot (Ladders^{TEP}), Every Place Counts Design Challenge, Citizens Toolkit, Transit-Oriented Development Technical Assistance Initiative, FTA Bus and Bus Facilities Ladders Initiative, FTA Design Thinking Tools for Communities, Mobility Design Challenge, and Safer People Safer Streets.

Stephanie was an invaluable leader of our Opportunities team, sharpening our focus, shaping our agenda, identifying and working with stakeholders, and recruiting, managing and inspiring a talented, diverse group of employees to carry out our goals. Secretary Foxx and I valued her thought leadership, and implicitly trusted her advice, which was always frank and well-considered.

The Honorable Phil Mendelson
November 26, 2019
Page Two

When deliberating a new direction or grappling with a difficult issue, our first question often was "What does Gidigbi think?" And it was not uncommon for the Secretary or me to mention an idea to Stephanie in the morning and have her return by mid-afternoon with a comprehensive roadmap for getting us to where we were trying to go.

I am delighted that someone of Stephanie Gidigbi's talent, experience, compassion, and vision is being considered for this leadership position where she can have a positive impact on the lives of transit riders in the DC region (of which I am one). The residents of Washington, DC and the surrounding area could not have a better representative on the WMATA Board than this remarkable young woman. I wholeheartedly endorse her confirmation.

Sincerely,



Stephanie J. Jones
President

c: Mr. Peter Johnson PJohnson@dccouncil.us

TESTIMONY OF TODD BROGAN
AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION, INTERNATIONAL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
PUBLIC HEARING

PR 23-542, Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Stephanie
Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019
NOVEMBER 26, 2019

Chairman Mendelson and members of the Council, a sincere thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Todd Brogan and I am an organizer with the Amalgamated Transit Union's International office. ATU is the oldest and largest union of transit workers in North America, representing more than 200,000 members, including more than 12,000 here in the DMV.

Today, you're considering appointment of a new principal director to represent DC on the WMATA Board. I am not familiar enough with Ms. Gidigbi's record to reflect on it here, but I am very familiar with recent generations of the WMATA Board and want to urge great caution as you move forward.

WMATA is a mess. It's a mess because the funding jurisdictions, including the District, allow it to be so. The hands off approach taken by this body, by the Mayor, and by the governors and respective legislatures of our neighboring states has resulted in rider death, worker exploitation, and contractor fraud.

The appointment and approval of Board members is often the last word we hear from funding jurisdictions. And once Board members are appointed, we rarely hear a word from them on issues of importance to workers and riders. When General Managers like Paul Wiedefeld privatize portions of service, as he is vigorously doing in Virginia, he too punts responsibility down field, often to the contractor. And when this union enters into collective bargaining negotiations with those contractors, they assert it is the agency itself that determines our fates.

We've talked before about the failure of privatizations in District transit, about Circulator, about Streetcar, about MetroAccess, about the decades of failed private sector management that preceded WMATA's creation. Now, Paul Wiedefeld has brought this regime of failure to Metrobus by privatizing the new Cinder Bed Road facility in Lorton, VA.

He entrusted it to Transdev, a company that defrauded the City of Baltimore and has dozens of labor law and OSHA violations on its record.

Transdev decided the way it would fulfill WMATA's promise of lower costs was to take that money directly out of the pockets of its workers, including many DC residents. That has led to the first Metrobus strike in 41 years.

Simultaneously, Transdev recently assumed control of the Fairfax Connector. There, too, they've driven the workers to a breaking point. If negotiations fail to produce an agreement today or tomorrow, we expect 600 more transit workers could go on strike in Northern Virginia next week.

Why does that matter to the DC Council? Because a county-wide strike in Fairfax will drastically reduce rail ridership on Metro. It will keep employees of countless DC businesses and agencies stranded in the suburbs. It will also likely lead to direct conflict with public sector Metro workers, who Wiedefeld has threatened to force to cross the Connector picket line. If he does so, the likelihood of a systemwide disruption will increase drastically.

This is what privatization has wrought. It could end tomorrow if Board members take responsibility for the agency they oversee, compel their contractor to settle a fair and just contract, and stop supporting the escalatory tactics that Transdev has deployed, which now threaten mobility region wide.

We ask that you draft a letter to WMATA encouraging its swift intervention before all hell breaks loose, and we ask that you ensure your appointee is prepared to represent DC values, including the right to organize and the right to equal pay for equal work.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I am happy to answer any questions.

1 **DRAFT COMMITTEE PRINT**
2 Committee of the Whole
3 December 3, 2019
4
5
6

7
8 A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

9
10 23-542
11 _____
12

13
14 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
15
16 _____
17

18
19 To appoint Ms. Stephanie Gidigbi as a member of the Board of Directors of the Washington
20 Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.
21

22 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
23 resolution may be cited as the “Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit
24 Authority Stephanie Gidigbi Appointment Resolution of 2019”.

25
26 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia appoints:

27 Ms. Stephanie Gidigbi
28 Upsal Street, SE
29 Washington, D.C. 20032
30 (Ward 8)

31 as a member of the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, in
32 accordance with section 5 of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact,
33 approved November 6, 1966 (80 Stat. 1324; D.C. Official Code § 9-1107.01(5)), and the
34 Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Board of Directors Act of 2012, effective April
35 27, 2013 (D.C. Law 19-286; D.C. Official Code § 9-1108.11), replacing Councilmember Jack
36 Evans, for the remainder of an unexpired term to end June 30, 2021.

37 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution,
38 upon its adoption, to the appointee, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and to
39 the Office of the Mayor.

40 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in
41 the District of Columbia Register.