



WABA
WASHINGTON AREA
BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION

November 2, 2020

Mayor Muriel Bowser
Executive Office of the Mayor
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Re: Capital Bikeshare operations during potential protests

Mayor Bowser,

On Tuesday, November 2nd, 2020, polls will close across the United States, and though the outcome of the national election will likely not be known for many days, first amendment activities are expected in the District of Columbia. As the city prepares for the coming weeks, I write to you on behalf of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association to insist that the District Department of Transportation maintain continual operation of the Capital Bikeshare system and not allow service suspension to be used to limit people's free movement or to suppress Constitutionally-protected protest.

In response to the protests in DC in the week following the Minneapolis Police killing of George Floyd, Mayor Bowser announced a curfew starting at 11pm on Sunday, May 31, 2020. But hours before the curfew was even announced, and without any communication to customers, all Capital Bikeshare stations in Washington, DC went offline and ceased allowing bikes to be checked out. The next day, the city announced its intention to deactivate Capital Bikeshare during curfew hours and to close 20 stations within 3 blocks of the White House "indefinitely." The system shutdown disrupted people's travel across the city, including those who took Bikeshare to attend the daytime protests downtown, and added tremendous stress and uncertainty to an already tense situation.

Capital Bikeshare is an essential component of DC's public transit system, which enables more than 10,000 average daily trips. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Bikeshare has become a lifeline for moving people, including essential healthcare employees, around the District, as bus and train service have become increasingly infrequent and inconvenient. Capital Bikeshare and public transit should never be used as tools to suppress peaceful protest or control people's free movement. We must insist that the Capital Bikeshare system remain open throughout the coming weeks.

Greg Billing
Executive Director

Delivered electronically

CC:

Lucinda Babers, Deputy Mayor for Operations and Infrastructure

Jeff Marootian, Director District Department of Transportation

Mary Cheh, Ward 3 Councilmember and Chairperson Committee on Transportation and Environment

Charles Allen, Ward 6 Councilmember

Kenyan McDuffie, Ward 5 Councilmember

Brooke Pinto, Ward 2 Councilmember

Brandon Todd, Ward 4 Councilmember