



WABA Testimony Presented at April 27th, 2023 WMATA Board Meeting

Good afternoon. My name is Kevin O'Brien and I am here today on behalf of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association and its 6,000 members across the Capital region. Our mission for over 50 years is to empower people to ride bikes, build connections, and transform places. We envision a just and sustainable transportation system where walking, biking, and transit are the best ways to get around.

Bikes and transit are a winning recipe for affordable and sustainable mobility across the region. Bikes, whether shared or personal, are the perfect tool for the first and last mile of a transit journey. Since 2019, WMATA has welcomed full-size bicycles on trains at all hours, where space allows. We and our members are so grateful for this change!

While most bike-plus-metro trips take advantage of bike parking and Capital Bikeshare at stations, the flexibility to bring a personal bike on the train has proved transformative for so many people, including myself. Biking to and from Metro on each end of a trip expands the reach of transit and can be quicker and more flexible than navigating bus connections. WMATA's network perfectly compliments the region's growing bike network and vice versa.

This month, we had the opportunity to meet with WMATA staff to review the new 8000-series railcar design. We deeply appreciated that engagement, and appreciate even more the thoughtful design and accessibility improvements staff developed and presented that notably improve on the 7000-series.

We enthusiastically support the proposed open gangway, walk-through design that, along with more bench seating, will help reduce crowding and allow more options to reposition once on the train. And we especially appreciate the inclusion of flexible spaces designated for bicycles, strollers and luggage. Designated space for those of us with bulkier items, combined with a more open layout, results in better accommodation and a smoother transit experience for ALL of WMATA's diverse ridership.

Thank you for the opportunity to share today, and we look forward to working with WMATA towards a multi modal future.