



**Statement by:**

**Emeka Moneme, Deputy Executive Director  
Federal City Council**

**On behalf of**

**the MetroNOW Coalition**

**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
Board of Directors  
777 North Capitol Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002**

**February 14, 2018**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, my name is Emeka Moneme, Deputy Executive Director for the Federal City Council. On behalf of the MetroNOW Coalition, I thank you for the opportunity to speak on the record in support of what we believe is required to restore the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority or Metro – dedicated funding and governance reforms.

I am pleased to be joined here today by other leaders of the MetroNOW Coalition – Jack McDougle, CEO of the Greater Washington Board of Trade, Bob Buchanan, President of the 2030 Group, and Stewart Schwartz, Executive Director of the Coalition for Smart Growth.

The MetroNOW Coalition is a group of regional leaders from organizations representing the region’s riders, advocates, businesses, and civic leaders who have come together to ensure that action is taken to put Metro—the backbone of our region’s transportation network—on a safe, smart and sustainable path forward in 2018. Together we represent a growing coalition of 19 business groups and organizations whose Members employ tens of thousands of people throughout the region that depend upon a safe, reliable, and efficient Metro system.

We would like to thank the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments for its continued leadership on this issue.

Metro has demonstrated its value to our regional economy and the development of neighborhoods throughout our region. It has changed the landscape of the metropolitan area, fostered new development, increased our area’s global competitiveness, altered our work and daily life habits, and become a powerful engine of social change and growth.

However, one of our region's greatest assets has become a growing liability and it is imperative that we work together to change that.

That is why as employers and investors in communities all across this region, the MetroNOW Coalition is calling on you, our elected officials in the region, to continue to advocate for and take the actions required to address the challenges facing Metro. It is time for better transit and the time to act is now.

The MetroNOW coalition remains in strong support of the regional commitment of \$500 million in new long-term, dedicated, and bondable funding for WMATA allocated under the existing formula with \$154 million from Virginia, \$167 million from Maryland, and \$178 million from the District of Columbia. We also support governance reforms that put WMATA first. A smaller board, populated by members with the experience and skillset for effective governance.

These changes are important and provide confidence to the region's stakeholders that the resources entrusted to Metro are both adequate and under good stewardship. We urge leaders in each jurisdiction to meet those key benchmarks this legislative session.

Momentum is clearly on the side of securing these reforms. We are in a historic moment with legislation being drafted, introduced and negotiated in Maryland, Virginia and the District to provide these critical reforms.

The MetroNOW Coalition has been very active in Annapolis, Richmond and Washington, DC over the past several weeks. We have been pressing the case for Metro's needs and communicating the benefit that this region provides beyond its borders. While the bills being considered are not yet completely aligned at this moment, there is singularity of purpose – to find common ground and address this issue in the current legislative sessions.

We believe that together we can restore the system to what was once the envy of cities around the world if we demonstrate political will and commitment to our region, to the national role of our city, and to our economic competitiveness.

Thank you again for this opportunity to address the Board today. We are happy to take your questions.