The Committee of 100
on the Federal City

July 13, 2022

The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20004
pmendelson@dccouncil.us

ATTENTION: Monique Bexley, Administrative Director
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RE: Follow up to Committee of 100 Testimony at July 7 NCPC Meeting

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

At the July 7, 2022 meeting of the National Capital Planning Commission you asked about the two tables[1] I sponsored on behalf of the C100 showing the difference in planning between the Long Bridge and the Union Station EIS proceedings. Our concern is about the number of trains and the tracks they will require. Those tables demonstrate that the reopened Union Station Expansion plans need to be updated to provide adequate track capacity to accommodate the projected train volumes. The currently planed upper and lower track configurations are based on outdated data (most more than 6 years old). Unless the Union Station EIS is based on up-dated and reliable projections, Union Station will be unable to accommodate the number of trains that need to use it in the future. This increased number of trains needs to be taken into account and the expanded Union Station needs to be designed to accommotdate that number of trains

FRA's representative David Valenstein attempted to explain the difference between the tables as being one-way versus round-trip train data. Mr. Valenstein is wrong. Neither the *Long Bridge EIS*, the *Union Station DEIS* nor the *NEC Future* study (on which the Union Station table is based) present train data in terms of one-way or round-trip information. Rather, the information in both of the C100-sponsored tables is in terms of frequency of trains on an hourly or daily basis.[2] The number of trains per day is the basic information needed to design the capacity of the rail tracks in the expanded Union Station.

[1] The two tables are Table 7-1 from App. B of the Union Station DEIS and table 3-9 from the Long Bridge EIS.

The projected number of trains in Table 7-1 are obtained from the *NEC Future Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement* issued in 2016. But three years later (in 2019), agreement was reached to build a new two-track rail bridge and a new fourth rail track be SW. This will increase the number of VRE trains reaching Union Station, allow VRE to thru-run to Maryland, allow MARC to thru-run to Virgina, and allow Amtrack to increase the number of trains south of Union Station and into Virginia. These changes will substantially increase the number of trains using Union Station and thereby our rail system will better serve the District of Columbia and the East Coast region.

Mr. Valenstein also attempted to justify his view by noting there are 46 VRE trains in Table 7-1, and 92 in Table 3-9, explaining that must mean 46 one-way trains in Table 7-1 and Table 3-9 shows 92 train trips– exactly double the 46 number, so that must mean round trips. That is also wrong. The reason for the difference in the VRE number is because the information in table 7-1 is from the 2016 NEC Future EIS[3]. But, as noted above, three years later, December of 2019, CSX and Virginia reached agreement whereby VRPT would build and own the new Long Bridge as well as adding a 4th track in SW to connect with Union Station. That plan was endorsed in the *Long Bridge FEIS* that issued August, 2020. The new two-track Long Bridge river-crossing and the new fourth track in SW will separate passenger/commuter from freight operations, thereby allow VRE to double its number of trains entering DC to 92 trains per day. The increased rail capacity south of Union Station will allow VRE and MARC to expand their plans to thru-run to Virginia.

The Council of Governments' Transportation Planning Board June, 2020 assessment [4] determined run-through service would:

- Improve Jobs-Housing Balance
- Reduce and Mitigate Peak Congestion on Highways and Metrorail and improve Reliability and Resiliency of the Transportation Network in the Washington Region
- Improve Service Convenience and Reliability for MARC aand VRE Riders
- Reduce Midday Train StolrageDemand at Union Station

The information in table 3-9 also needs to be updated. The third entry, and notes 2 and 3 on that table refers to Amtrak/DC2RVA. DC2RVA is the *DC to Richmond, Southeast High-Speed Rail* – a proceeding in which the DEIS issued September 2017. Once updated, that information needs to be include in the updated design of Union Station's upper and lower track configurations

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[2] The NEC Future defines the data in those in tables as "Frequency is measured by the number of trains per day for both Intercity and Regional rail services" (NEC Future Tier 2 FEIS, page 5-23).

[3] The **NEC Future** Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement issued on December 2016.

[4] *Market Assessment and Technical Considerations for VRE-MARC Run-Through Service in the National Capital Region Market Assessment and Technical Considerations for VRE-MARC Run-Through Service in the National Capital Region https://www.mwcog.org/documents/2020/06/12/market-assessment-and-technical-considerations-for-vre-marc-run-through-service-in-the-national-capital-region/*

Mr.Valenstein went on to state the Amtrak Intercity and Long Distance numbers from table 7-1 together amount to 39 trains, and indicated that was comparable to the 44 Amtrak/DC2RVA number that appears in table 3-9. But the comparable number of Amtrak trains in Table 7-1 needs to also include the 58 Metropolitan trains.[5] Thus, a total of 87 Amtrak trains is in fact shown in Table 7-1. Again, this increased number of trains needs to be taken into account and the expanded Union Station needs to be designed to accommotdate that number of trains

I welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your staff to answer any question you might have.

Sincerely

Monte Edwards
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Cc: Matthew Fils, Senior Urban Designer
National Capital Planning Commission

[5] **Metropolitan** – New Intercity service envisioned in NEC FUTURE with high-performance trainsets that operate on infrastructure tailored to regular service patterns (clockface headways), Metropolitan trains can provide faster journeys stopping at more destinations more frequently, at a lower cost and with timed connections with express Intercity and Regional train services (*NEC Future*, page 4-6).

Table 7-1 Ops. Table 1 - Revenue Train Volumes for Existing and Future Operating Plans per Direction

		Existing Baseline		2030+		2040 NEC FUTURE	
Operator	Service	Peak Hour	Full Day	Peak Hour	Full Day	Peak Hour	Full Day
Amtrak	HSR	1	16	3	45	4	57
	Regional/SEHSR/ Intercity (LD excluded)	3	22	3	27	1.5	23
	Long Distance	1	7	1	6	0.5	6
TBD	Metropolitan	0	0	0	0	4	58
MARC	Penn	4	27/28	6	39	7*	57*
	Camden	2	10	2	10	4	30
	Brunswick	3	9/10	2	12	6	38
VRE	Fredericksburg	2	8	3	19	4*	23*
	Manassas	2	8	3	22	4*	23*

*** Includes MARC/VRE run-through service at 4 trains per hour per direction in the peak hour.**

Table 3-9 | Train Volumes in the Long Bridge Corridor

Train Operator	Current Number of Trains per Day[1]	No Action Alternative Number of Trains per Day[2]	Action Alternatives Number of Trains per Day[3]
VRE	34[4]	38	92
MARC	0	0	8
Amtrak/DC2RVA	24	26	44
CSXT	18	42	42
Norfolk Southern	0	6	6
TOTAL	76	112	192

[1] Current train volumes are based on existing operation agreements and confirmed by bridge stakeholders.
[2] Planning year 2040 No Action train volumes were established based on the concurrent DC2RVA EIS, Rail Service Growth in the No Build Alternative, Table 2.5-2, http://www.dc2rvarail.com/files/5315/0412/9086/Chapter_02_Alternatives_DC2RVA_DEIS.pdf, and confirmed by bridge stakeholders.
[3] Planning year 2040 planned train volumes were established based on input from bridge stakeholders, including CSXT, VRE, Amtrak, Norfolk Southern, and MARC, as well as the concurrent DC2RVA EIS.
[4] The current number of VRE trains per day includes non-revenue movements.