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TRANSIT BACKERS DENOUNCE PROPOSED FARE INCREASES, CALL FOR PARITY BETWEEN FARE HIKES AND GAS TAXES

Two leading groups of Washington-area transit advocates today denounced proposed Metro fare increases as excessive and unfair to transit riders. The Action Committee for Transit and Prince George's Advocates for Community-Based Transit said that both auto commuters and transit riders should pay their fair share of increasing transportation costs, with Metro fares increasing no faster than the gasoline tax. The two organizations pointed out that Metro fares have been raised three times since 1992, yet during that period there has not been a single increase in gas taxes in Maryland, Virginia, or D.C. They urged the Metro board to adopt a budget that ensures parity between transit fares and gas taxes. Under the compact that established Metro, local and state governments are legally obligated to pay their fair share of Metro's expenses as determined by the Metro board. The Action Committee for Transit is a Montgomery County transit advocacy group with nearly 1000 dues-paying members. Prince George's Advocates for Community-Based Transit is a county-wide advocacy group whose membership represents a wide spectrum of community leaders. The two groups are the only transit rider organizations in Metropolitan Washington whose leadership is democratically elected by their members.