

Dominique Moore
Committee of Transportation and the Environment
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Friday, February 16th, 2024

Hello, Councilmember Allen and DC Council staff. My name is Dominique Moore. I serve as a PAVE Ward 4 PLE Board member.

My name is Dominique Moore and I have been living in Washington DC since 2002. I have personally experienced the devastating impact of inadequate security measures and lack of support for our youth. In 1994, my father, who was a yellow taxi cab driver, was tragically murdered by two young men in SE DC. This experience has shown me how important it is to have proper security measures, programs, training, and resources in place for our youth.

As a parent, I face limitations in transportation options for my own child, who is on the autism spectrum. And I will be honest there are no suitable modes of transportation available for him to attend regular, after-school, or camps. And that means I am his sole means of transportation in a city with a supposedly robust transportation system, and it is disheartening.

I am here today to advocate for the hiring of OSSE bus drivers and the improvement and expansion of the DC Connect bus routes. I often witness school buses arriving late to drop off children at my son's school, and I have heard firsthand from the children about their early morning struggles and late arrivals. These students are often expected to just right in while they are tired, hungry, or just feeling left out because they missed something which can result in rebellion and behavior issues. The lack of drivers and availability is unacceptable. I also ask for an investment in the DC Connect program which has minimal routes that do not meet the demands of this city. Personally my child's elementary school in Ward 4 is not serviceable.

I also want to address the issue of safety on buses and trains. It is concerning to see young children mixed in with the general public without proper supervision. There needs to be a stronger police presence, including Safe Passage Workers and WMATA PD, on trains, platforms, and buses. The disrespect and mistreatment of our elderly and the prevalence of fights and uncomfortable situations make it clear that we need a serious assessment and investment in creating student-only train cars and bus lines during school arrival and dismissal times like what



is done for facilities on the other side of Rock Creek Park. With the right structure, guidance, and investment, we can provide a safer and more respectful environment for our students.

Furthermore, it is crucial that the individuals who interact with our children on platforms and trains are properly trained and equipped to handle their needs. They should be trained in de-escalation techniques, restorative practices, youth development, and responding to youth in crisis. We are facing a crisis, and it is unfair to expect children to navigate these challenges on their own. The paths they walk are shaped by the environment we create for them, and currently, all they see is violence and disrespect. They deserve better.

As a proud resident of DC and a mother of a neurodivergent child, I am asking for the assistance of the Deputy Mayor of Operations and Infrastructure and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority to help make our city better. We need to change the direction and address the disparities that we see unfolding before our very eyes. It is time to invest in creating a safer and more supportive environment for our youth, and communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to the solutions you develop and am available for questions.

Sincerely,

Dominique Moore

Citywide and Ward 4 PLE Board Member, PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education)