



May 31, 2020

Joint Statement from: ACT-LA, Investing in Place and Los Angeles Walks

Metro abandons riders and their responsibility: systemwide suspension of transit harms communities facing two pandemics

Last night Metro failed the community and the region it serves by shutting down the entire regional system of buses and trains, leaving people stranded without notice on a weekend when many workers were back at their jobs. It then appears, through LAist reporting and widespread videos and photos posted on social media, that the agency then handed over their buses to the LAPD in order to transport people arrested during the protests.

This cannot go unnoticed and cannot go unsaid. What was done was unacceptable and calls into question who the leadership of Metro is prioritizing. After all, who uses Metro buses and rail the most? Black and brown riders, undocumented immigrants, essential workers, people surviving on limited incomes, and our unhoused neighbors.

Yesterday, May 30, was a profound day across the country and in the City of Los Angeles, with large numbers of protests calling for the end of police brutality against Black lives and justice for George Floyd. At 7pm, the City of LA issued a citywide curfew that would start at 8pm, giving community members a one-hour notice. Then at 8pm, and with ZERO notice, Metro Los Angeles halted all bus and train service across our county of 11 million people, turning its back on those who rely on the bus and train without warning and without accountability.

The protests in LA took place primarily in the Fairfax area and downtown Los Angeles yet Metro shutdown service throughout the entire county. After a day of protests and escalating police aggression, it was a night we needed our leaders to prioritize everyone getting home safely - especially our most vulnerable community members and essential workers who often have no other transportation options; instead, Metro left them stranded. The decision to instead transport protestors to jail with our public buses was outrageous.

Make no mistake - it is Angelenos who pay for Metro services with our tax dollars. As stewards of a \$7 billion annual budget paid for with public funds, this was an irresponsible and reckless decision by Metro and we demand answers for how this decision was made.

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