



FEDERAL CITY COUNCIL

**Testimony by Laura Miller Brooks
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Federal City Council**

Committee of the Whole
[PR 24-359](#), Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority,
Tracy Hadden Loh Appointment Resolution of 2021

October 20, 2021

Dear Chairman Mendelson and members of the Committee of the Whole,

My name is Laura Miller Brooks, and I am the Federal City Council's Senior Transportation and Infrastructure Associate. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the passage of the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Tracy Hadden Loh Appointment Resolution of 2021. This would appoint Ms. Tracy Hadden Loh as a principal member of the Board of Directors of the 16 Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

The Federal City Council (FC2) is a business-led non-profit civic organization dedicated to the improvement of the District of Columbia. Founded in 1954 to harness the resources and creativity of the public, private sector, and philanthropic sectors, to address the District's biggest problems, the FC2's work around transportation and the environment has historically focused on long-range transformational investments that enhance the vitality and resiliency of the District. Examples include the founding and continued funding of the Metro system, Union Station and Pennsylvania Avenue's redevelopment, and many other projects driven by our community. Recently, the FC2's transportation work has focused on increasing access to opportunities for more District residents by transforming the bus, and enhancing last mile connections. Over the course of the COVID crisis, the FC2 has focused on the fact that today's actions around reopening and recovery will have long-range impacts, especially in the realm of transportation, use of public space, and infrastructure.

None of us will have succeeded if a recovered DC looks the same as the DC that existed before the pandemic. This is especially true in the realm of transportation and infrastructure. At the heart of this is, what does WMATA's future hold? What will Metrorail and Metrobus look like next month, next year, next decade, or in 2050?

The WMATA board will have immense influence over the future of the District and region. They will have to face maybe WMATA's biggest existential threat in the system's existence -- the return of ridership after the pandemic, and the system's long-term sustainability -- with bravery. And in the same budget cycle, they have to engage with some of the most transformational infrastructure projects our region

has seen in more than a century -- Union Station's next century transformation, the Blue/Orange/Silver line expansion, and the Bus Transformation Project are just a few of the projects on the docket for the next two years. The future of downtown DC, the region's ability to create more affordable housing, increase access to high quality jobs and education, stimulate economic growth, and combat the climate crisis are wholly connected to (and dependent upon) the future of Metro.

Tracy Hadden Loh knows all of this, and so much more. She's not just professionally one of the most qualified people in the country for this role, she's personally committed to the District, and to making Metro everything it can and should be. The Federal City Council is thrilled with the nomination of Tracy Hadden Loh to the WMATA board. We trust she will bring the insight, expertise, passion, and love of the District and transit riders to this seat. We appreciate her commitment, and we look forward to supporting her and the District's priorities in this role.

I am available to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue.