

**The original documents are located in Box 119, folder “METRO (DC Mass Transit System)” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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June 17, 1975

SUBJECT: MEETING ON METRO RAIL SYSTEM

Do you have any readout from yesterday's meeting on the Metro Rail System? Are the stories in the paper this morning accurate?

GUIDANCE: Well, the President did meet and discuss for about an hour (54 minutes) the Metro situation with Secretary Coleman, Jim Cannon, and Jim Lynn. He received a full briefing on the entire matter and during that meeting, directed Secretary Coleman to work with local officials to solve the problems facing the Metro Rail System.

Did the President endorse completing the entire 98 mile Metro System?

GUIDANCE: Congress established this goal and the President feels that the entire system should be completed.

Did the President approve the diversion of interstate highway funds to Metro construction?

GUIDANCE: Under existing law, The Federal Aid Highway Act of 1973, local communities, if they can work up a plan acceptable to the Secretary of Transportation, can divert interstate highway funds to mass transit. The Secretary of Transportation must make a finding that the diversion of interstate highway funds will not impare the basic integrity of the interstate highway system. Therefore, the President feels that attempts should be made to complete Metro by using the interstate highway funds earmarked for the D.C. Metropolitan area.

The purpose is to insure that the general taxpayer in other parts of the country does not have to increase their burden for transportation construction in this area.

(Any additional questions should be referred to the Department of Transportation.)

JGC

February 3, 1976

SUBJECT:

METRO FUNDING

Recently there has been a great deal of talk about the inadequacy of funds available to complete the Metro system, which culminated last week in the resignation of the director of the operation. It has been charged that, unless the President takes some action, the project will never be completed.

What is the President's position on this?

**GUIDANCE:** First, the President is concerned with the completion of Metro, as is demonstrated in his FY 77 budget. He has proposed total outlay increases for mass transit of 16% over FY 76. Part of that increase is embodied in his proposal to accelerate the use of interstate highway funds to transit projects--and principally the Metro. The budget proposes limits on Federal funds for Metro, but it targets funds to make certain segments of Metro operable earlier than now planned.

Also, for many months now, Secretary Coleman has been working with the District and the States of Virginia and Maryland on this issue. The President feels that the Secretary, who has stated that he believes that with the President's budget there is enough interstate aid money to handle the situation, is the appropriate person to make such judgments.

ME

June 10, 1975

SUBJECT:

SENATORS APPEAL TO PRESIDENT FOR  
HELP IN METRO FINANCIAL CRISIS

Maryland Senator Beall & Rep. Gude have charged a total lack of Federal leadership in coping with the Metro subways financial crisis and yesterday sent a letter to the President in resolving the financial impasse. Metro has requested an additional \$1.3 billion in new Federal aid for the \$4.5 billion project. Secretary Coleman has said that he could not support a Federal outlay of this size to complete the 98 mile rail system.

Is Secretary Coleman reflecting the views of the President when he says he does not support a Federal outlay of \$1.3 billion to complete the Metro system?

GUIDANCE: The President is generally aware of the financial problems facing Metro.

It is my understanding that Senator Beall and Rep. Gude have sent a letter to the President. However, we have not yet received that letter at the White House, and once it is received it will be staffed out and the recommendations will then be made to the President. Therefore, it would be premature to make any comments on the President's position until we have a chance to review the letter.

FYI ONLY: The President has received some recommendations from OMB. The President has scheduled a meeting on Friday to discuss this whole Metro problem, but at this time, we should not get the President in a corner on this subject. END FYI ONLY.

JGC