Present Performance & Service Committee Members
Charis Austin, David Billardello (Chair), Tracie Coffman, Steven Gilbert, Andy Guy

PRESENT PERFORMANCE & SERVICE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 7, 2019, 4:00 p.m.

Rapid Administrative Office, 300 Ellsworth Avenue, SW

AGENDA

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. MINUTES – March 5, 2019 Committee Meeting

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS
   a) Wave Update
   b) Ridership & On-Time Performance Review
   c) Fare Evasion Update
   d) Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) Consultant
   e) Update on HR 1139 – Transit Worker and Pedestrian Protection Act

3. NEXT MEETING – July 9, 2019
MINUTES OF

PRESENT PERFORMANCE & SERVICE COMMITTEE

March 5, 2019

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members Present: Charis Austin, David Bilardello (Chair), Tracie Coffman, Any Guy

Committee Members Absent: Steven Gilbert

Staff: Robin Crothers, Max Dillivan, Andrew Johnson, Asher Lockwood (intern), Brian Pouget, Dina Reed, Marie Tubergen, Conrad Venema, Mike Wieringa

Others: Watchdog Miller

Mr. Bilardello called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Watchdog Miller commented that related to the Walker study, Bristol is better since it has more residences. Every BRT station is a transit divorce. Routes 14 and 19 could easily be connected. If the DASH 20 and 22 could run 3 minutes later on south end it could still take transfers from local stops coming down the Fulton corridor. Every veteran in town has to wait 28 minutes to connect to the outbound 16 to the Metro Health area. The Rapid should link up better to the veterans' facilities. He willing and able to handle the COA better than out-of-towners. Why are there no bus only lanes in Grand Rapids. We could speed up routes in the Michigan/Bridge corridor by linking up south side routes. There were 89 days of abuse on Route 19.

1. MINUTES – January 8, 2019 Committee Meeting

Mr. Bilardello asked for changes to the minutes. None were offered. The minutes of the January 8, 2019 Present Performance & Service Committee were approved as written.

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A request was made by staff to take item d) Wave Update first due to staff conflicts.
d) Wave Update

Marie Tubergen, Wave program manager, gave an update on the status of the program. Wave revenue was 14.62% of total revenue during January 2019 which has grown from 6.09% in August 2018. Approximately 20% of the current ridership uses the Wave card. The first retail sales will be Speedway, Spartan stores and Walgreens over the next few months. Full Wave card implementation is planned for December 31, 2019.

Ms. Reed commented that we are planning to stop selling paper tickets as of September 30, 2019 and stop accepting paper tickets as of December 31, 2019. We are still evaluating whether this is enough time for the transition.

Ms. Tubergen answered questions from the committee noting that feedback has been very positive from those using the Wave card, including Grand Rapids Public Schools. We will continue to allow cash fares but the use of change cards is still being discussed. She expected that once the full retail network is up and running we should see a significant increase in the use of the Wave card. We are working with the Airport regarding a kiosk on their property.

Mr. Guy asked about the industry statistics on the split between fare cards like the Wave card and other fare methods. Ms. Tubergen stated she has requested some of this type of information.

Mr. Bilardello asked that a Wave update be included on every agenda for the Present Performance & Service Committee.

a) Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA)

Mr. Venema stated that The Rapid is obtaining input from this committee and the Future Planning & Technology Committee on the COA scope of work. He reviewed the revisions made to the scope since the last committee meetings. The Future Committee met on March 4 and approved the scope and to go ahead with the RFP.

Mr. Guy commented that the scope for the COA is very comprehensive. He suggested adding an overarching goal statement to the document that identifies the vision of the study. He appreciated the integration of mobility options. He asked about different modes and how we could integrate them.

Mr. Johnson noted that The Rapid operates fixed route and paratransit services but the COA will address an overarching mobility strategy that will complement and integrate different modes. We are interested in partnerships and looking at our service area and beyond regarding mobility options. The COA is not about just buses. Certain areas and needs require different modes of service which can be set up to integrate with the larger network.
Mr. Venema stated that we know that the community wants longer hours, more frequency and more coverage. The COA will include a revenue neutral plan for a period of 1-3 years and a future plan for 3-6 years if additional revenue is identified.

Mr. Johnson mentioned that the consultant needs to find the most innovative ways to meet the needs. It is standard practice to evaluate a system about every 10 years for possible improvement. The COA should lay the groundwork for the future when opportunities are presented to expand inside and outside of the six cities.

Mr. Guy asked for an example of an overarching goal statement for the COA. Mr. Johnson suggested the statement could say that the COA should position The Rapid as a mobility integrator that serves the community at the highest level now and is positioned to expand in the future. Mr. Guy suggested certain groups be added to the statement such as, for residents, employers, workers, visitors, etc.

Ms. Reed noted there were similar comments at the Future Committee meeting. The procurement criteria in the RFP will lay out for the consultant the overall goals and reason for pursuing the COA.

Mr. Johnson commented that we want a COA consultant who can push the boundaries for innovation. He was confident that we will get a topnotch consultant for the COA.

In response to a questions from Mr. Bilardello and Mr. Guy, Mr. Johnson stated that we will incorporate committee comments into the final COA scope and put together the full RFP. We do not need full Board approval on the scope or to send out the RFP. Award of a consultant contract will go to the Board.

Mr. Guy asked about timing for the RFP and study implementation. Mr. Venema gave some tentative dates regarding the procurement process which would have the RFP going out on the street on March 8, 2019 and result in study implementation in late May 2019. He noted that the timeline is aggressive but he was confident that we could make it work.

A motion was made by Guy, supported by Coffman, to approve the COA scope with inclusion of the overarching goal statement. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Ridership Review

Mr. Venema reviewed the December 2018 Ridership & Productivity Report. He noted that Route 19 is the best performing and most improved route. The Silver Line ridership continues to grow. Overall ridership has been declining. We are on track for a possible 1.6% ridership increase at year end. He noted that January 2019 ridership will show a 21% decrease from the large number of weather-related school closings.
c) **On-Time Performance**

Mr. Venema noted that on-time performance is actually better in the winter than during the construction season. Route 19 is the most improved regarding on-time performance. The Silver Line is still struggling in the downtown area due to congestion. It does well south of Wealthy Street. The first quarter of FY 2019 experienced an average on-time performance rate of 85%.

e) **Report Card Standards**

Mr. Bilardello reported that the Present Committee was asked to review the report cards standards to determine if they are the appropriate standards to measure and provide suggestions for any desired modifications.

Mr. Venema stated that staff is comfortable with the current standards. He noted that ridership impacts other standards such as cost-effectiveness. The standard for on-time performance is 83% which should improve with the COA. He commented that we need to have achievable benchmarks.

Ms. Coffman asked if the standards that we use are similar to what other transit systems measure. Mr. Venema noted that we measure against our own past performance. He noted that a comparison can be done with other transit peers. Ms. Coffman would like to see a comparison of peer systems.

Mr. Johnson commented that these same standards are tracked by other transit systems. We need to explore what metrics work best to gauge performance and what does the Board want to see. The National Transit Database (NTD) tracks many performance indicators.

In response to a comment from Mr. Guy, Mr. Johnson mentioned that staff has discussed some other measures which we can bring to the committee.

Mr. Bilardello stated that we want ridership growth. In order to achieve this the service needs to be reliable to build confidence and credibility. Mr. Johnson concurred that the service needs to be convenient and reliable.

Mr. Venema informed the committee that he would develop a comparison for peer systems to The Rapid.

Mr. Pouget commented on paratransit report cards standards. Paratransit does not measure ridership as much as efficiency – number of passengers per hour. With on-time performance, paratransit has an edge in that we know who our passengers are and can get information from them. He noted that the Special Services Department works with ADA eligible, PASS and seniors. We need first mile-last mile service and will need to set goals for customer satisfaction.
Ms. Austin asked if the discussion regarding metrics and customer satisfaction includes RideLink. She mentioned that rides are long and often riders are arriving too early. Talking with the passengers is important.

Ms. Reed stated that, from an IT perspective, she would like to investigate a way to introduce a customer survey for paratransit customers either electronic or possibly not as a way to get more feedback. Ms. Austin offered to participate in this conversation.

f) **Winter Bus Stop/Station Maintenance**

Mr. Johnson reported that with the extreme winter weather this year, there has been more focus on the condition of bus stops and stations. He stated that The Rapid has 1,600 bus stops and we do not have staffing to keep them cleared of snow. We need to look at innovative ways to partner with organizations and/or neighborhoods. The goal is to have discussions and develop a plan for next year.

Mr. Guy indicated that this problem is not just during extreme winter weather. Riders need access to bus stops and we need to be aware of the equity issues. We need to figure out how to get better at keeping these areas accessible. He mentioned that sidewalk clearance is also an issue in the City of Grand Rapids.

Mr. Pouget noted that most of the issues with the Silver Line stations have been addressed and also for shelters. The bus stops present some real challenges that need to be resolved.

**Committee Member Comments**

**Route 19** - Mr. Bilardello stated that Route 19 is doing much better and Spectrum Health feels it is successful. However, recently there have been a few incidents that are concerning to Spectrum employees which Spectrum is discussing. The free service creates certain problems that are being taken seriously and hopefully will not result in Spectrum pulling out of the relationship.

Mr. Johnson mentioned that Rapid staff plan to meet with Kevin Judd at Spectrum in a collaborative effort to resolve the matter.

Ms. Coffman expressed concern that some transit riders have an issue with the disparity of the riding public. Many people have not been able to develop a comfort level with this aspect of riding public transit.

Mr. Johnson noted that The Rapid will be part of these conversations as it relates to the homeless and work with stakeholders to determine potential answers.

Mr. Guy suggested that the Downtown Ambassador program be consulted to assist.
Michigan Street – Mr. Guy mentioned the current problems with congestion on Michigan Street which will only get much worse during the upcoming construction season. He stated that we need to develop some proactive solutions since on-time performance for The Rapid will be drastically impacted.

Mr. Johnson commented that he does not feel that more parking is the answer. This is a difficult problem to solve.

Ms. Coffman stated that there were DASH rides provided at the Neighborhood Summit held this past weekend. Perhaps giving people a more hands-on experience with public transit would help some make the switch from car travel to transit.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

Robin Crothers, Board Secretary
ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

The Rapid considers a bus to be on time if it is anywhere from 0 to 5 minutes late. A bus that arrives before the scheduled time or 5 minutes after the scheduled time is not considered to be on time. On-time performance is subject to seasonal trends; better on-time performance in the winter and spring and less so in the late summer and early fall. In recent years, The Rapid’s on-time performance had been negatively affected to a much greater extent by road construction season rather than weather. This year, however, the extreme inclement weather experienced throughout much of February and March had a significant impact on system-wide on-time performance. January and February 2019 had an on-time performance of approximately 83.5% whereas the same two months in 2018 had on-time performance of over 86%. This year, the month of March saw an increase to 86% but was still notably less than March of each of the last three years.
We can also look at the change in on-time performance by route by year. The table reveals that there have not been dramatic changes over the past three years and that overall system performance has stayed very close to 84% overall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Route 1 – Division</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>76.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 2 – Kalamazoo</td>
<td>80.1</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 3 – Madison</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>90.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 4 – Eastern</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>85.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 5 – Wealthy</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>91.2</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>93.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 6 – Eastown</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 7 – West Leonard</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>-5.2%</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 8 – Grandville</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>84.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 9 – Alpine</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>-0.7%</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>84.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 10 – Clyde Park</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 11 – Plainfield</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>87.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 12 – West Fulton</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>-0.5%</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 13 – Michigan/Fuller</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>-4.4%</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>85.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 14 – East Fulton</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>91.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 15 – East Leonard</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>-0.2%</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>88.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 16 – Metro Health</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td>-3.1%</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>91.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 17 – Woodland/Airport</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>92.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 18 – Westside</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 19 – Michigan Crosstown</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>-7.3%</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>91.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 24 – Burton Crosstown</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>91.2</td>
<td>-0.2%</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 28 – 28th Street</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 44 – 44th Street</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>-0.9%</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>91.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Line</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>-5.9%</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>84.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>83.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>84.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>-0.4%</strong></td>
<td><strong>83.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>83.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>86.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the routes showing the most improvement have been the historically worst performing routes, which are also the routes that have been the primary focus of the Route and Service Planning Team. The main reduction of Route 19 on-time performance came when it was realigned to become a crosstown route for FY 2017. Perhaps the most concerning decrease is shown by the Silver Line, and staff is limited in responses as service cannot be realigned and frequencies must be maintained. This drop in performance is primarily due to the increasing congestion the Silver Line is experiencing in the downtown Grand Rapids area.

Since January, on-time performance has improved for all but three routes (Route 1 being the only route with a decrease of greater than one per-cent). Warmer temperatures in March have enabled notably improved schedule adherence.
RIDERSHIP

Ridership has been on the overall decline at The Rapid for the past four years. Looking at the monthly fixed route ridership graph reveals this overall trend.

Average Weekday Fixed Route Ridership by Month

As with on-time performance, there are seasonal fluctuations, with the lowest monthly ridership occurring in the summer and highest in the fall.

Analyzing ridership by route, there has been a wide range of change experienced. Route 19 shows the most dramatic increase just based on the September 2018 ridership gains due to extremely low performance prior to the service change. Prior to the service change, Route 19 was one of the worst-performing routes in the system. Since the beginning of the fiscal year, Route 19 ranks 8th in the fixed route system in terms of number of passengers carried. The Silver Line continues to be the system’s best performing route, showing yearly increases since its inception.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>FY 2016</th>
<th>FY 2017</th>
<th>FY 2018</th>
<th>% Change FY16-FY18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Route 19</td>
<td>25,613</td>
<td>14,265</td>
<td>39,594</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Line</td>
<td>773,531</td>
<td>817,489</td>
<td>847,015</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 28</td>
<td>416,584</td>
<td>447,876</td>
<td>434,804</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 17</td>
<td>83,553</td>
<td>84,542</td>
<td>84,552</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 16</td>
<td>226,901</td>
<td>212,870</td>
<td>218,589</td>
<td>-3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 12</td>
<td>1/2,118</td>
<td>1/6,253</td>
<td>1/6,253</td>
<td>-5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 1</td>
<td>540,278</td>
<td>531,142</td>
<td>504,444</td>
<td>-6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 7</td>
<td>253,417</td>
<td>241,564</td>
<td>234,086</td>
<td>-7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 2</td>
<td>641,518</td>
<td>624,756</td>
<td>584,174</td>
<td>-8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 8</td>
<td>329,794</td>
<td>311,294</td>
<td>300,035</td>
<td>-9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 10</td>
<td>270,404</td>
<td>255,091</td>
<td>242,898</td>
<td>-10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 44</td>
<td>276,168</td>
<td>258,870</td>
<td>245,086</td>
<td>-11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 13</td>
<td>233,907</td>
<td>218,752</td>
<td>206,775</td>
<td>-11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 9</td>
<td>584,296</td>
<td>554,312</td>
<td>511,305</td>
<td>-12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 4</td>
<td>584,011</td>
<td>550,983</td>
<td>510,685</td>
<td>-12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 5</td>
<td>307,102</td>
<td>293,660</td>
<td>267,977</td>
<td>-12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 6</td>
<td>394,100</td>
<td>367,370</td>
<td>339,763</td>
<td>-13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 24</td>
<td>248,173</td>
<td>227,864</td>
<td>213,055</td>
<td>-14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 18</td>
<td>256,333</td>
<td>255,463</td>
<td>219,734</td>
<td>-14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 11</td>
<td>356,200</td>
<td>332,607</td>
<td>298,127</td>
<td>-16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 14</td>
<td>187,400</td>
<td>177,099</td>
<td>154,802</td>
<td>-17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 15</td>
<td>377,193</td>
<td>334,665</td>
<td>302,779</td>
<td>-19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route 3</td>
<td>246,732</td>
<td>217,800</td>
<td>196,452</td>
<td>-20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,785,926</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,506,821</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,119,984</strong></td>
<td><strong>-8.6%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unfortunately, the table does show many more routes with decreases. Route 3 – Madison was hit particularly hard with the closing of Grand Rapids Plastics on the south end of the route and the moving of a Hope Network job site out to the airport area.
CONGRESS.GOV

H.R.1139 - Transit Worker and Pedestrian Protection Act
116th Congress (2019-2020) | Get alerts

There is one version of the bill.

Text available as: XML/HTML | XML/HTML (new window) | TXT | PDF (PDF provides a complete and accurate display of this text.)

Shown Here:
Introduced in House (02/11/2019)

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1139

To amend title 49, United States Code, to require the development of public transportation operations safety risk reduction programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 11, 2019

Mrs. Napolitano (for herself, Mr.Katko, Mr. Lowenthal, Mr. King of New York, Mr. Quigley, Mr. David Scott of Georgia, Mr. Huffman, Mr. Pocan, Mr. Lipinski, Mr. Cummings, Mr. Garamendi, Ms. Blunt Rochester, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Grijalva, Mr. Suozzi, Ms. Brownley of California, Mr. Aguilar, Mr. Nadler, Mr. Sherman, Ms. Schakowsky, Ms. Titus, Mrs. Watson Coleman, Mr. Carson of Indiana, Mr. Johnson of Georgia, Mr. Blumenauer, Mr. McCauchin, Mr. Vargas, Mr. Sean Patrick Maloney of New York, Mr. Higgins of New York, Mr. Tonko, Ms. Johnson of Texas, Ms. Clarke of New York, Mr. Kilmer, Mr. Sires, Mr. Pallone, Mr. Brown of Maryland, Mr. DeSaulnier, Mr. Rose of New York, Mrs. Davis of California, Mr. Krishnamoorthi, Ms. Moore, Ms. Roybal-Allard, Ms. Omar, Mr. Green of Texas, Mrs. Lawrence, Ms. Norton, Ms. Jayapal, Ms. Fudge, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Takano, Ms. Lofgren, Mr. Carbaial, Mr. Larsen of Washington, Mr. Norcross, Mr. Pascrell, and Mr. Cartwright) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To amend title 49, United States Code, to require the development of public transportation operations safety risk reduction programs, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Transit Worker and Pedestrian Protection Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Public transportation workers are vital to the safe, efficient, and affordable movement of people and to the economic prosperity of the country.

(2) Assaults on public transportation workers are a growing problem, with daily reports of bus operators and rail transit employees being beaten, having items thrown at them, being spat upon, and being verbally abused.

(3) This is not only a tragic situation for public transportation workers, but also a major safety risk for passengers, other motorists, and pedestrians.

(4) An additional risk to safe bus operation is the existence of blind spots in the view from a bus operator workstation that—

   (A) prevent a driver from fully seeing the driver’s surroundings; and
   
   (B) have caused serious accidents with pedestrians.

(5) Blind spots are avoidable, and buses can be designed to provide the bus operator a clear view outside the vehicle.

(6) Section 3022 of the FAST Act (49 U.S.C. 5329 note; Public Law 114–94) required the Secretary of Transportation to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking to address protection of public transportation operators from the risk of assault.

(7) The Secretary of Transportation has failed to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking as required under section 3022 of the FAST Act.

SEC. 3. BUS OPERATIONS SAFETY RISK REDUCTION PROGRAM.

Section 5329 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(1) BUS OPERATIONS SAFETY RISK REDUCTION PROGRAM.—"

"(1) REQUIREMENTS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall require each recipient that operates fixed route bus service to—"

"(A) develop a risk reduction program for bus operations under paragraph (2) to improve safety by reducing the number and rates of accidents, injuries, assaults on bus operators, and fatalities;"

"(B) submit the program required under subparagraph (A), including the implementation plan required under paragraph (3), to the Secretary for review and approval; and"

"(C) implement the program and plan approved by the Secretary."

"(2) DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAM.—A recipient required to develop and submit a risk reduction program for bus operations under paragraph (1)—"

"(A) shall develop the program by conducting risk analysis on the bus operations of the recipient;"

"(B) may incorporate the program into an applicable comprehensive safety plan that the recipient prepares under subsection (d), if the plan addresses each requirement under this subsection; and"

"(C) shall develop the program in cooperation with bus operators and collective bargaining representatives of bus operators, including the development of—"

"(i) the risk analysis required under subparagraph (A); and"

"(ii) the implementation plan required under paragraph (3)."
(3) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Each risk reduction program for bus operations under paragraph (1) shall include an implementation plan for—

(A) reduction of vehicular and pedestrian accidents involving buses that includes—
   (i) deployment of driver assistance technologies for bus operators that reduce or prevent accidents; and
   (ii) measures to reduce visibility impairments for bus operators that contribute to accidents, including retrofits to buses in revenue service and specifications for future procurements that reduce visibility impairments;

(B) bus operator assault mitigation, including—
   (i) the deployment of assault mitigation infrastructure and technology on buses, including barriers to restrict the unwanted entry of individuals and objects into bus operators’ workstations when a recipient’s risk analysis determines that such barriers would reduce assaults on and injuries to bus operators; and
   (ii) conflict de-escalation training for bus operators;

(C) installation of seating and modification to design specifications of bus operator workstations that reduce or prevent injuries from ergonomic risks; and

(D) other measures that the Secretary determines would significantly reduce the number and rate of accidents, injuries, assaults on bus operators, and fatalities related to bus operations.

(4) UPDATING REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall require each recipient required to develop a program under paragraph (1) to—

(A) update the program annually; and

(B) resubmit the program for approval by the Secretary not less than once every 3 years.

SEC. 4. RAIL OPERATIONS WORKER ASSAULT RISK REDUCTION PROGRAM.

(a) Public Transportation Safety Program Section.—Section 5329 of title 49, United States Code, as amended by section 3, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

(m) Rail Operations Worker Assault Risk Reduction Program.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall require each recipient that operates a rail fixed guideway public transportation system that is not subject to regulation by the Federal Railroad Administration to—

(A) develop a risk reduction program for assaults on rail workers under paragraph (2) to improve safety by reducing the number and severity of assaults on rail workers, including operators and station personnel;

(B) submit the program required under subparagraph (A), including the implementation plan required under paragraph (3), to the Secretary for review and approval; and

(C) implement the program and plan approved by the Secretary.

(2) DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAM.—A recipient required to develop and submit a risk reduction program for assaults on rail workers under paragraph (1)—

(A) shall develop the program by conducting risk analysis on assaults on workers serving the rail operations of the recipient;

(B) may incorporate the program into an applicable comprehensive safety plan that the recipient prepares under subsection (d), if the plan addresses each requirement under this subsection; and
“(C) shall develop the program in cooperation with rail workers and collective bargaining representatives of rail workers, including the development of—

“(i) the risk analysis required under subparagraph (A); and

“(ii) the implementation plan required under paragraph (3).

“(3) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Each risk reduction program for assaults on rail workers under paragraph (1) shall include an implementation plan for rail worker assault mitigation.

“(4) UPDATING REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall require each recipient required to develop a program under paragraph (1) to—

“(A) update the program annually; and

“(B) resubmit the program for approval by the Secretary not less than once every 3 years.”.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) AMOUNT AND DURATION.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out implementation plans under the bus operations safety risk reduction program described in subsection (l) of section 5329 of title 49, United States Code (as added by section 3 of this Act), $25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.

(b) FORMULA.—Of the amounts made available to carry out subsection (l) of section 5329 of title 49, United States Code, for a fiscal year—

(1) 80 percent shall be distributed under the formula set forth in section 5336 of title 49, United States Code, other than subsection (b) of that section; and

(2) 20 percent shall be distributed under the formula set forth in section 5311(c)(3) of that title.

SEC. 6. TRANSIT WORKER ASSAULT DATA.

Section 5335 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) TRANSIT WORKER ASSAULT DATA.—

“(1) REPORT.—A recipient shall report to the Secretary, for inclusion in the National Transit Database, any information on each assault on a transit worker.

“(2) OTHER REPORTS.—A report required under paragraph (1) shall be separate from the reporting on other safety incidents in the National Transit Database.

“(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) ASSAULT ON A TRANSIT WORKER.—The term ‘assault on a transit worker’ means any circumstance in which an individual knowingly, without lawful authority or permission, and with intent to endanger the safety or health of any individual, or with a reckless disregard for the safety or health of human life, interferes with, disables, or incapacitates any transit worker while the transit worker is performing his or her duties, including circumstances that do not require immediate medical attention or that do not result in a fatality.

“(B) RECIPIENT.—The term ‘recipient’ has the meaning given the term in section 5329(a).”.