

Member, Board of Supervisors
District 3



City and County of San Francisco

AARON PESKIN

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

Supervisors and SFMTA Reach Agreement to Pull November Ballot Measure *In exchange for package of reforms, including no fare increases in two-year budget cycle*

San Francisco – Supervisors Aaron Peskin and Dean Preston reached an agreement Wednesday with SFMTA leadership on a package of transit service reforms, in exchange for dropping a Charter Amendment that would have eliminated the SF Municipal Transportation Agency’s exclusive authority to fix transit fares, among other things.

On April 14, 2020, the Board of Supervisors overwhelmingly passed a resolution directing the SFMTA Board of Directors to refrain from any fare increases during the 2020/21 budget cycle, in light of the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on transit-dependent communities. In a subsequent vote on April 21, 2020, the SFMTA Board of Directors unanimously approved a monthly fare increase that would have topped \$100 for the first time in the City’s history.

Supervisors Peskin and Preston introduced a Charter Amendment to force the SFMTA to establish a fare increase policy tied to equity and performance standards and empower the Board of Supervisors to reject any fare increases without meeting those criteria. It would have also revised minimum standards for on-time performance and service delivery Muni routes and required the Controller to conduct an independent Muni Transportation Quality Review.

“Every day I’m fielding calls from frantic constituents who are struggling financially during COVID-19,” said Supervisor **Aaron Peskin**, who also chairs the SFCTA Board, the County’s transit financing agency. “My colleagues and I are committed to working with SFMTA to identify revenue to make the investments we need to keep Muni running, but they must be rooted in equity and performance standards. And when elected leaders establish policies reflecting these constituent needs, city departments should take them seriously, so we don’t have to go to the ballot to get transit justice and accountability.”

“I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors, the Mayor, and with the MTA Board to improve transit service and reliability,” said Supervisor **Dean Preston**. “We will work together on new revenue measures that will allow us to avoid fare increases, maintain and improve service, and protect our operators.”

Over the last couple of months, the Supervisors have engaged in negotiations with SFMTA leadership, as well as and labor and community stakeholders, and reached the following agreements:

- SFMTA will *not* increase fares in the upcoming two-year budget cycle (FY21 and FY22).

- SFMTA , the Mayor’s Budget Office and the Board of Supervisors will work together on a new revenue measure that will help the Agency avoid major service cuts, particularly in transit-dependent communities.
- A fare increase policy will be developed collaboratively that ties any future fare increases to performance standards and transit equity.
- The Charter Amendment will be tabled.

“The SFMTA Board's top priority is to deliver reliable transit service and this pandemic has been devastating not just to Muni riders but has disproportionately affected low income and communities of color, who heavily rely on transit” said **Gwyneth Borden**, SFMTA Chair of the Board of Directors. “To provide some economic relief, the SFMTA will not be raising fares and looks forward to working with the Board of Supervisors on new funding solutions.”

“Muni has a substantial and growing structural deficit, but we agree now is not the time to raise fares,” said SFMTA Director, **Jeffrey Tumlin**. “We look forward to partnering with the Board of Supervisors to find sustainable sources of revenue needed to deliver the Muni service San Franciscans need.”

“Our 2,500 union members cannot support raising fares during a worldwide pandemic,” said **Roger Marengo**, President of TWU Local 250-A. “Increasing fares does not directly correlate with improvements for transit service, and operator lay-offs shouldn’t be used as an excuse to justify fare increases. If we want to preserve both jobs and transit service, we should start by cutting at the top – not by increasing fares at the bottom.”

The Charter Amendment would need a vote of 6 members of the Board of Supervisors to be placed onto the November 3, 2020 ballot for voter consideration. It will be tabled at the Board of Supervisors instead. The legislative file can be found here: <https://sfgov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4543259&GUID=94C4B75E-3D7F-41D3-9F5F-4C26022C22C6&Options=ID|Text|&Search=fare>

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