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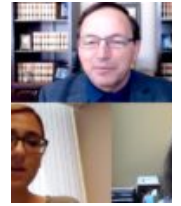
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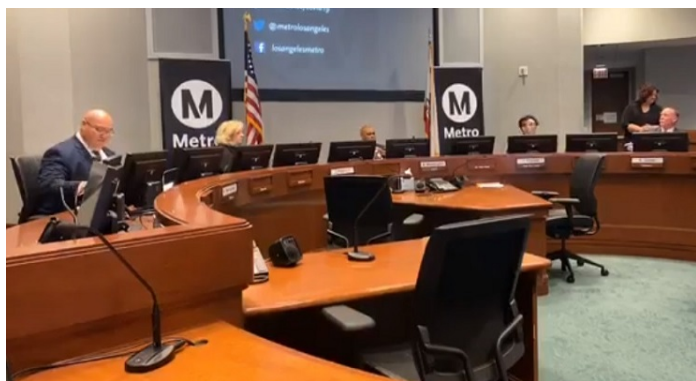
L.A. Metro Board Directors File Motion to Revise Agency's Policing Policies

Gold Line could see new emergency-response model

CITY NEWS SERVICE

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Members of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's board of directors filed a motion Thursday for the agency to have alternative officials respond to incidents rather than armed law enforcement.

The motion, co-sponsored by Los Angeles City Councilman Mike Bonin and county supervisors Janice Hahn and Hilda Solis, urged Metro to develop policies for different responses to nonviolent crimes and other offenses.

"Around the country and all over Los Angeles, people are re-imagining how to provide public safety," Bonin said. "Metro needs to be at the forefront of that and make changes that assure that all of its passengers feel safe. That starts by acknowledging that we cannot rely on an armed police presence for every issue and we need smarter, more effective solutions."



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Potential alternatives would include a transit ambassador program that provides staffed presence at Metro facilities and on Metro vehicles as well as social workers, mediators or mental health professionals.

Bonin said jurisdictions around the country are considering similar approaches to public safety. Earlier this week, several of Bonin's colleagues on the Los Angeles City Council called for a new emergency-response model that would have trained specialists, rather than police officers, respond to many types of calls, including those regarding homelessness, mental health and substance abuse issues.

Bonin and council members also proposed creating a Los Angeles Office of Violence Prevention.

The motion directs Metro to develop the new policies and approaches in consultation with passengers and community members representative of the agency's ridership.

The councilman said it is "crucial" for Metro to make changes, given a history of complaints of racial bias in policy, particularly from younger Black people and Latinos.

"For years, Metro has heard that its system of policing was making huge segments of its passengers feel less safe and feel threatened," he said. "This is our moment to change that."

Bonin is also submitting motions, co-sponsored by Solis, in response to Metro's decision to suspend passenger service on May 30, stranding many passengers in the middle of a curfew and a separate decision the same day to allow Metro buses to be used to transport detainees who had been arrested for curfew violations or failure to disperse during the protests.

The motions call for new rules to prohibit the use of Metro vehicles for detainee transport and new protocols regarding suspensions of service.

All three motions are expected to be considered by the full Metro Board of Directors at the board's June 25 meeting.



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