



NEWS

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FEDERAL JUDGE APPROVES AGREEMENT SETTling LAWSUIT BETWEEN MTA AND CLASS ACTION PLAINTIFFS

Federal Judge Terry Hatter this afternoon approved an agreement reached between the MTA and the class action plaintiffs, represented by the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. The agreement calls for additional bus service and continuation of the sale of the monthly pass, as well as a commitment by the Authority to devote additional resources for security on the bus system.

"I'm pleased the judge agrees with us that more buses, safer transit, and stable fares is what's needed for the transit dependent," said Larry Zarian, MTA Chairman. "We are determined to keep the needs of all transit users foremost in our transportation planning. This agreement underscores what we are going to accomplish. We will continue to have dialogue with all parties to improve our services to our customers."

The agreement calls for the MTA to field additional bus service to reduce the number of people who stand on a bus. Currently, on a regular sized 42-seat bus, as many as 18 people stand. Under the agreement, by the year 2002, the standee ratio would be cut in half.

More....

The agreement also calls for:

- 51 added buses to be put into service by the end of December 1996
- 51 more buses to be put into service by June, 1997
- During the next two years, the MTA also will add 50 more buses to improve access by transit dependent riders to travel to destinations such as medical facilities, job sites and vocational schools
- Maintaining a policy of fairly distributing resources devoted to security for both buses and trains.
- Continuation of the sale of the monthly bus pass, and a rollback in price of the pass from \$49 to \$42 for three years, or until a "low income" based pass is established. The MTA also will sell a semi-monthly pass at \$21 and a weekly pass priced at \$11.
- Off-peak discount fares also will be established on selected bus lines used predominately by the transit dependent; the fare for this off-peak service will be 75 cents.
- A two-year commitment by the MTA to maintain the current cash fare of \$1.35 and the token at 90 cents. Transfers will remain 25 cents.

More....

Funding to pay for the service improvements will be identified as the MTA updates its Long Range Plan early next year.

The agreement, which resolves a lawsuit filed two years ago in federal court, was jointly negotiated by mediator Donald T. Bliss, and by attorneys representing the MTA and the plaintiffs which include the Labor/Community Strategy Center, the Bus Riders Union, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Greater Los Angeles, and the Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates. Lawyers for the defense include David Kelsey, Assistant County Counsel and Ken Klein. Lawyers for the plaintiffs include: NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., the ACLU Foundation of Southern California, Paul Hoffman, Gary Bostwick, and K. S. Park. The Environmental Defense Fund has also provided counsel to the attorneys for the plaintiffs.

The settlement agreement will be implemented beginning December 1, 1996.

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