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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Metro Launches New Ad Campaign to Free Angelenos from the High Cost of Gasoline

Metro has launched a new ad campaign that urges drivers to free themselves from record high gasoline prices.

Ads depict a motorist hand-cuffed to a gas pump and read: "Free yourself. Go Metro." The ads will appear on billboards and bus shelters and also will be placed on the sides of buses and in newspaper advertisements throughout Los Angeles County.



L.A. City Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, who also serves as chairman of the Metro Board, urges all Los Angeles commuters to free themselves from record high gas prices.

"The message is simple. It's high time that all Angelenos take a serious look at how much money they are spending at the pump. If you're burdened by having to pay spiraling prices for fuel, ease the burden by choosing public transit."

The cost for a single gallon of gasoline now exceeds that of a \$3 Metro Day Pass that is good for unlimited daily travel on the entire Metro Bus and Rail system. The American Automobile Association reports the cost of regular unleaded gasoline in the Los Angeles-Long Beach area has risen from \$2.58 to \$3.36 per gallon in the last year alone. The cost of filling one's sport-utility vehicle a single time is now the same or more than the cost of a \$52 Metro pass good for an entire month.

Yearly commuting costs on the Metro System are just \$624. It costs many thousands of dollars more to travel daily by car when all costs associated with fueling, operating and maintaining an automobile are included.

Just traveling by Metro one or two days per week can dramatically save commuters time and money, and make a substantial improvement in freeway commute times overall.

Besides public transit, Metro offers an array of other ridesharing programs that make it easy for drivers to find commute alternatives, including car and vanpools. Several incentives are available through the agency to encourage ridesharing, including gift certificates, vanpool rebates and a guaranteed ride home program that provides the ridesharer a free taxi or rental car ride home in case of illness, emergency, or working overtime.

Motorists interested in forming or joining a carpool can visit www.commut SMART.info for additional information and to receive a list of potential rideshare partners in their area.

The "Free Yourself" ad campaign complements Metro's ongoing marketing efforts to lure solo drivers from their cars for everything from workday commuting to discretionary trips such as shopping, dining and entertainment. The public has responded by utilizing Metro Bus and Rail services in growing numbers. First quarter 2006 ridership gains are up from previous year levels by 11 percent for Metro Rail and 7 percent for Metro Bus.

Drivers outraged by sky high gasoline costs will be able to download a "Free Yourself" screen saver for their computers by visiting Metro's web site at metro.net.



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- Editor's note: To obtain an image of the graphic for publication, send an e-mail to <mailto:mediarelations@metro.net>

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