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March 31, 2017

Paul J. Wiedefeld
General Manager and Chief Executive Officer
Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority
600 5th Street, NW
Washington DC 20004

Dear Mr. Wiedefeld:

On behalf of Board of Directors of the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA|DC) we write to express our deep concern regarding WMATA's decision to paint the interior of the Metro Stations bright white. This not only interferes with the design character of the stations, it creates an additional maintenance requirement that the system can ill afford.

We strongly urge you to review this decision given that:

1. There was no public notice of this program that creates a wholesale change to the aesthetic of the system
2. LED lighting is soon to be installed in stations so painting is not needed to raise light levels; in fact, once the lights are installed, those stations that are painted may be uncomfortably bright
3. By painting the concrete every stain or flaw will show, and
4. Metro has given itself an unneeded continuing maintenance issue that it will have to spend money on for years to come.

President Lyndon Johnson requested that the Metro be a world class system, "designed to set an example for the Nation." Architect Harry Weese designed the system with durable and handsome materials. Exposed concrete is a key element of the design and was selected for its longevity and low maintenance. Weese designed the vaults so that no one could touch them, thus keeping them clean and free of graffiti, greatly reducing maintenance.

We strongly urge you to stop the painting and to look for another solution that will not harm the look of the Stations nor cause a continuing maintenance cost.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Sponza, AIA
President

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Executive Director



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