



**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING**  
**1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW**  
**WASHINGTON, DC 20004**

**Charles Allen**  
Councilmember, Ward 6

**Chairperson**  
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety  
**Co-Chairperson**  
Special Committee on COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery

**Committee Member**  
Business and Economic Development  
Health  
Transportation and the Environment

July 18, 2022

Chief Michael Anzallo  
Metro Transit Police Department  
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority  
600 5th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dear Chief Anzallo:

All Metro riders should feel safe using both rail and bus services. Unfortunately, several past reports have documented Metro Transit Police Department (“MTPD”) officers engaging in potential misconduct, including excessive force<sup>1</sup> and participating in contests encouraging arrests<sup>2</sup>. These cases undermined public confidence in the MTPD and prompted calls for greater transparency into MTPD operations and increased accountability following instances of misconduct, including from the Council. I am now pleased to learn that you plan to equip MTPD officers with body-worn cameras (“BWCs”) in your efforts to foster accountability and transparency. This shows leadership and action in the right direction, and I fully support your efforts to do so.

As you know, the District first issued body-worn cameras to Metropolitan Police Department (“MPD”) officers in 2014 as part of Phase I of its BWC program. By December 2016, MPD had equipped every patrol officer with a BWC. As the Chairperson of the Council’s Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, timely access to BWC footage has been an indispensable tool in my oversight of the MPD, and it has changed the culture of policing for the better. BWC footage has not only captured cases of officer misconduct but has conversely corrected mistaken public narratives surrounding certain incidents.

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<sup>1</sup> Natalie Delgadillo, *A Man Is Suing Metro Police For Repeatedly Tasing Him In A Station*, DCIST (September 24, 2019), available at <https://dcist.com/story/19/09/24/a-man-is-suing-metro-police-for-repeatedly-tasing-him-in-a-station/>.

<sup>2</sup> Justin George, *Metro Transit Police held a competition to encourage arrests and other enforcement*, WASHINGTON POST (February 17, 2020), available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/trafficandcommuting/metro-transit-police-held-a-competition-to-encourage-arrests-and-other-enforcement/2020/02/12/02146d84-4dd7-11ea-9b5c-eac5b16dafa\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/trafficandcommuting/metro-transit-police-held-a-competition-to-encourage-arrests-and-other-enforcement/2020/02/12/02146d84-4dd7-11ea-9b5c-eac5b16dafa_story.html).

But we learned from that experience that issuing BWCs to all officers will not – by itself – create transparency or accountability. For a BWC program to be truly effective and reform current practices, policies must be in place to ensure that officers consistently activate their BWCs and face consequences if they fail to do so. Furthermore, when an officer does capture an incident on their BWC, there must be clear guidance for when, and in what manner, that footage is stored and preserved. Finally, there must be clear standards for determining when footage should be reviewed and released to the public. MPD has these policies because of a robust public and subject matter expert engagement effort we collaboratively undertook when the BWC program was launched, and I encourage MTPD to do the same.

As you develop these policies in consultation with MTPD and WMATA leadership, union officials, and legal advisors, I recommend that you provide members of the public – particularly District residents and interested stakeholders – with meaningful opportunities to provide input on, learn about, and engage with draft policies. I also request that you provide my office with a copy of any written policies related to MTPD’s BWC program once they are finalized.

Thank you for your leadership in creating a BWC program, and if you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Kevin Whitfield, my Senior Policy Advisor, at [kwhitfield@dccouncil.us](mailto:kwhitfield@dccouncil.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles Allen".

Charles Allen, Ward 6 Councilmember  
Chairperson, Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety

Cc: Chairman Phil Mendelson