



ASSOCIATED STUDENTS, INC.
California State University, Los Angeles

October 17, 2017

Metro Board of Directors
3rd Floor, Metro Board Room
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Metro Board of Directors,

The California State University, Los Angeles Associated Students, Incorporated (ASI) is writing to request that Metro further evaluate the U-Pass Pilot Program (U-Pass) and provide a more affordable transit pass option for college students. As the program currently operates, it depends heavily on university subsidies in order for students to receive a discounted rate. Many of those subsidies come directly from students, through tuition and fees. Therefore, students ultimately end up incurring the high cost of transit even with a U-Pass offered on their campus.

Students not enrolled in the U-Pass Pilot Program often enroll in the Metro College/Vocational Pass that costs students \$43 per month, or about \$10.75 per week. In Spring 2017, Metro's U-Pass Pilot Program's rate was determined by a weekly rate of \$10.03, only a .72 cents savings from Metro's Vocational Pass.

Now, for Fall 2017, Metro's rate for the U-Pass is \$230.69 for 23 weeks, or \$10.03 per week, which being sold to participating institutions for \$1.18 less per week than the rate of the Metro College/Vocational Pass. In order for the U-Pass to truly be sold at a better discounted price, schools are left with the task to subsidize the passes for their students.

Cal State LA offered the U-Pass in Spring 2017 for \$95, but due to an increase of enrollment in the program, the increase of covered weeks, and lack of resources to subsidize the program, Cal State LA sold the U-Pass for Fall 2017 at \$125 per student and the projected cost for Spring 2018 is \$125.

In Fall 2017, Cal State LA requested ASI, the university's student government, to help subsidize the program, resulting in a \$70,000 allocation from the 2017 ASI budget. However, ASI, like many other student governments in Los Angeles County, are funded through collected fees from the student body. This U-Pass funding avenue, then, resulted in students again indirectly absorbing the cost of the program.

At Cal State LA, Parking and Transportation Services sold 1,899 passes in Spring 2017, surpassing the expectation of selling 500 passes.

There is no doubt that Metro has work to do to increase ridership in public transportation. There are more than 1.4 million public college students in Los Angeles County with only 14,000 (1%) actively participating in Metro's reduced fare college pass programs (i.e. the College/Vocational (C/V) Pass and Institutional Transit Access Pass (I-TAP) programs). We appreciate that the U-Pass offers the opportunity for Metro to partner with institutions of higher education and work closely to increase the ridership of college students. These efforts are commendable, but ASI cannot, in good faith, allocate any more student resources to the U-Pass from our annual operating budget. The current model of the U-Pass is neither sustainable, nor affordable, for a student organization with a very limited budget and we request that Metro explore



ASSOCIATED STUDENTS, INC.
California State University, Los Angeles

additional U-Pass funding resources via the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund/Low Carbon Transit Operations Program, California's Cap-and-Trade Program, and/or through South Coast Air Quality Management District's Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee. ~~We are closely monitoring plans for transit passes, such as Assemblymember Holden's Transit Pilot Pass Program. Still, we are ready to partner with see efforts from the~~ Metro and/or the State of California to develop an affordable and sustainable transportation option for studentsa reduced or free pass program for students. In the meantime, we are hoping for a U-Pass that offers a better discount to students than the current U-Pass Pilot Program, the expiring College/Vocational Pass, and the Institutional Transit Access Pass. We look forward to working with Metro to find an amicable solution that fosters a better transit experience for our students with environmental friendly practices and an enhanced public transportation system in Los Angeles.

Thank you,

David Zitser
President
Associated Students, Incorporated
California State University, Los Angeles
asipres@calstatela.edu | (323) 343-4778