

**FRANK R. WOLF**  
10TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA



241 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4610  
(202) 225-5136

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES:

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CO-CHAIR—TOM LANTOS  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

December 2, 2011

13873 PARK CENTER ROAD  
SUITE 130  
HERNDON, VA 20171  
(703) 709-5800  
(800) 945-9653 (IN STATE)

110 NORTH CAMERON STREET  
WINCHESTER, VA 22601  
(540) 667-0990  
(800) 850-3463 (IN STATE)

wolf.house.gov

Mr. Charles D. Snelling  
Chairman  
MWAA Board of Directors  
1 Aviation Cir  
Washington DC 20001

Dear Mr. Snelling:

I am in receipt of your letter dated December 1, 2011. I am extremely disappointed that the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) is choosing to fight the bipartisan changes contained in Public Law 112-55. It is critical that the Dulles Rail project, which MWAA controls, be completed on time and at or under budget so that northern Virginia drivers are not saddled with continually-increasing tolls. These changes to the MWAA board will increase transparency, provide greater accountability and ensure that the best interests of the airports and the region are protected.

Contrary to what your board believes, the intent of Congress could not be more clear. The changes to the MWAA board are included in both the bill and the accompanying conference report. There was no need for MWAA to go to the expense of hiring outside counsel, which essentially provided the board with an advocacy piece. You should know that I am going to ask the U.S. Department of Transportation's Inspector General, who is presently auditing MWAA's operations, to find out which member of the board requested hiring outside counsel and how much it cost.

Also, it is my understanding that the presidential appointees' service is governed solely by federal statute. The ability of any federally appointed board member to serve past the end of their term ended when President Obama signed PL 112-55 on November 18, 2011. Consequently, federally appointed members whose terms have expired are no longer members of the board. These former members should not travel to board meetings at MWAA's expense, be allowed to take part in any board deliberations or cast any votes.

The board has a responsibility to ensure that the airports it oversees continue to thrive and that the Dulles Rail project is completed successfully. Yet, the recent actions of the board, which have been strongly criticized in the press, will erode confidence in the authority and undermine both airports and the Dulles Rail project. Fighting these straightforward and bipartisan changes to the board not only adds to MWAA's expenses, but continues what a recent *Washington Post* editorial said is "a virtuoso display of tone-deaf politics, at least

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partly as a result of the lack of accountability by the unelected, 13-member board that sets policy for the authority.”

I urge the board to immediately accept the changes in PL 112-55 so the region can once again have confidence that the airports and the Dulles Rail project have sound management.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress

FRW:cw