

METRO LUTHERAN MINISTRY

February 6, 2020

Robbie Mackinen
KCATA
1200 E. 18th Street
Kansas City, MO 64108

Dear Mr. Mackinen,

On behalf Metro Lutheran Ministry and the 21,000 individuals served by our organization annually throughout the Greater Kansas City area, I am pleased to express my support for the proposed Zero Fare program.

MLM provides essential social service supports to individuals and households experiencing homelessness and poverty in Jackson, Wyandotte, Clay and Platte Counties. The majority of our clients have income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$25,750 for a family of four); they struggle to make ends meet each day. Access to the bus line is life-saving for many of these households, as they lack their own transportation, or cannot afford their own vehicle or gas. They rely on the bus to get them to and from school, work, the grocery store, church, and to access necessary social services.

Zero Fare would be life-changing for the thousands of individuals served by our programs. The following statements of support have been provided by staff of MLM:

“My clients are always ecstatic when I ask if they need a bus pass. Then, when I tell them about the 90 day One-Ride pass, they are crying because they know that they won’t have to struggle to find the bus fare to get to where they need to go. Those that are doing job search, usually have to limit their searching for when they have the fare to ride. The free fare makes it possible for them to get where they need to go whenever they need to go.”

“If the bus system was free it would give our clients more flexibility in when they can come to MLM to receive services. Often times clients will schedule their pantry/happy bottom visits around when they have bus fare. Clients get anxious when they come to pantry because they are not sure how long it will take and if their transfer runs out then they have to pay the fare. Clients that come to the agency for emergency assistance and fail to bring all the documents would not have to stress about having bus fare to return with the correct documents. Overall I believe it would take the stress of trying to figure out how to pay for bus transportation among all the other things they have going on in their lives.”

“A \$1.50 bus fare, \$3.00 there and back, may not seem like a lot to many people but for the clients we serve it could mean the difference between what they have to eat for lunch. Social service agencies offer bus fare, but again the client will need to get to the agency to secure those passes. Having the ability to hop on the bus and be able to get to where you need to be without

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(Inspired by Micah 6:8)



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worry of coming out of your pocket would be a great benefit not just to our clients but to the city as a whole.”

“Our clients face countless obstacles. For many of them, every day is a struggle. One of the things that they need is the ability to get around – to visit family, to get to groceries, doctor’s appointments, and jobs. The zero fare initiative would ease their burden. It is that simple.”

In short, Zero Fare would have a life-changing, life-saving impact on the 21,000 individuals we serve each year. We fully support Zero Fare in the Kansas City metro area.

Sincerely,



Becky Poitras
Development Director
Metro Lutheran Ministry

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3031 Holmes • Kansas City, Missouri 64109-1435 • 816-931-0027 • www.mlmkc.org