Dear Mr. Rogers,

We represent a coalition of transportation advocacy groups in the Los Angeles area, and we are writing to urge you to stand firm and reject Metro's request to remove one wealthy neighborhood from the bus-only lanes project on Wilshire Boulevard.

Most of Los Angeles' transit network is served by buses, so right now buses are one of the only ways to get around the region without a car. Bus-only lanes are a crucial way that Los Angeles can make buses faster and more reliable, and thus build a transit network that offers real regional mobility. We support bus-only lanes: as a real alternative to the congestion that plagues our city, as a cost-effective way to improve public transportation for those who have no other option, and as a way to make better use of our public streets in order to move people and not just cars.

For all of these reasons, it is crucial that the bus-only lanes on Wilshire succeed. If the project is completed, it will be the first bus-only lane on a long corridor in our city. Over 80,000 people per day ride the bus on Wilshire currently, and this project promises to reduce travel times for all of those people by up to 20 minutes.

Removing the wealthy neighborhood located along the route between Comstock Ave and Selby Ave sets a dangerous precedent. It permits neighborhoods who feel inconvenienced by the project to jeopardize its regional benefits. This project already suffers from a gap in Beverly Hills. Allowing Metro to poke another hole in the project sends a message for future projects: if a bus-only lane comes to your block, and you don't like it, you can shut it down through your neighborhood.

More immediately, allowing Metro to poke a hole in this project threatens its success. Travel time reductions for buses will not be as large, and travel times will not be as reliable, particularly in the future. Metro claims that there is little congestion between Comstock and Selby now, so buses do not need their own lane through this segment. There are a number of problems with this argument. First, it is our understanding that the logistics of the project would require a larger gap - from Comstock Ave to Veteran Blvd. Parts of this larger segment *are* congested. Second, the segment is certain to become more congested as the region grows. In two years, or five years, buses will be stuck in traffic through this section while they travel freely in bus-only lanes throughout the remaining length of the corridor.

Do not approve Metro's request to remove the section from Comstock Ave to Selby Ave. Ensure that bus-only lanes in Los Angeles reach their full potential, and ensure that this project demonstrates how well bus-only lanes can work.

Thank you,

Michelle Go, President, Bruins for Transit

Kristen "Herbie" Huff, co-founder, Bicycle Coalition at UCLA
Jennifer Klausner, Executive Director, Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition
Ryan Snyder, Green LA Transportation Working Group
Sun-young Yang, Lead Organizer, Clean Air Campaign
Barbara Lott-Holland, Co-Chair, Bus Rider's Union