



**SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT**  
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2022

December 23, 2022

Janice Li  
PRESIDENT

Mark Foley  
VICE PRESIDENT

Robert Powers  
GENERAL MANAGER

Jim Wunderman  
President and CEO Bay Area Council  
P.O. Box 5135  
Berkeley, CA 94705

RE: Bay Area Council Member Letter

DIRECTORS

Debora Allen  
1ST DISTRICT

Mark Foley  
2ND DISTRICT

Rebecca Saltzman  
3RD DISTRICT

Robert Raburn, Ph.D.  
4TH DISTRICT

John McPartland  
5TH DISTRICT

Elizabeth Ames  
6TH DISTRICT

Lateefah Simon  
7TH DISTRICT

Janice Li  
8TH DISTRICT

Bevan Duffy  
9TH DISTRICT

Dear Mr. Wunderman,

Thank you for reaching out to share the concerns of the Bay Area Council and its members about the safety, cleanliness, and reliability of BART.

Rider safety is BART's top priority as we welcome people back to our system. We appreciate the Bay Area Council's support in advocating for new revenue to expand our operating budget to bolster our safety initiatives and to help pay for safety investments such as our new fare gate project. Also, we appreciate the Bay Area Council's helpful Return to Work surveys funded by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. The survey results have helped prioritize our efforts to fully restore service, double down on cleaning, and increase the presence of safety staff in our system.

High visibility patrols and other targeted enforcement actions are having an impact. Recent signs of progress include:

- BART Police Officers through November made more felony arrests in 11 months than were made in any of the last four years.
- Electronic item thefts are down from their peak in October 2019 of 141 to only 45 in November.
- Our unarmed Transit Ambassadors patrolled an average of 1,242 trains per month from July through November and during that time made a total of 4,075 educational contacts.
- Our Crisis Intervention Specialists who are focused on connecting people in need with support services performed nearly 1,900 welfare checks across the system in just the last three months.
- According to passenger surveys, sexual harassment has decreased at BART. From 12% of surveyed riders saying they experienced harassment at BART in the last 6 months in 2021 to 9% in 2022.

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We have more uniformed personnel, sworn officers, and unarmed employees than ever and we are looking to add more. We face the same recruiting challenges as police departments across the Bay Area and nation which is a lack of qualified candidates who want to become sworn officers. Despite that, there has never been a pause in recruitment at the BART Police Department (BPD) and the BART Board has authorized funding to fill every vacant officer position.

BART PD will continue to be relentless in its recruitment efforts and its commitment to maintaining a visible presence in the system. We are pursuing innovative approaches to boosting that presence. In addition to BART PD's new Progressive Policing and Community Engagement Bureau, we recently entered a new partnership with the City of San Francisco to add attendants to our downtown San Francisco stations.

We are united in our efforts to prioritize safety. I understand BART staff are working with Bay Area Council staff to convene a meeting for the BART General Manager and BART Police Chief to have a discussion with you and BAC members about your concerns.

We are eager to have the discussion as well as the support of the business community to help public transit respond to the rising crime impacting the region and our fiscal cliff.

Sincerely,



Janice Li  
President



Rebecca Saltzman  
Director District 3, immediate past President