From: dredaylov@aol.com
To: Public Testimony
Subject: bus cuts
Date: Tuesday, March 25, 2025 6:47:42 PM

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Hi,I'am andre johnson I've worked for ridekc for 26 years as a bus driver and out of the 26 years the fear of my safe never came into play as much as it as now, when the free fare came about. I know you all want to know what the ridership numbers are, but they are false numbers. All we do now is just ride the homeless around, some of the passengers call the bus a mobile home for the homeless. They ride with no purpose and the purpose of the bus is to get you from point A to B safely, it's not a homeless shelter! They will ride with all there belongings, put them in the seat then they will seat in the seats with there feet up and go to sleep. they will get mad if a passenger ask if they can take there stuff out the seat so they can sit down and if the driver ask they will take it up a notch and start threating and cussing the driver out. They will ride like this to the end of the route to where the drive will have to ask them to step off the bus and that to will cause them to get mad at the driver, leading them to cuss the driver out. Then they will get off, but they will get back on and do the same thing, they will ride back to the other end of the route, to the point that the bus driver as to tell them to catch another bus. This goes on all day every day, when they are on the bus they're harassing's other passenger begging for money, smokes, having inappropriate conversation and even sexually harassing the female passengers and even the female bus drivers. We have some homeless people that us wheelchairs, some need it and some don't, they only have it so when they go to the corner to beg it looks better. But it take maybe 3minutes to get them on and maybe 2 to get them off, it depends on them. This makes the buses late every time! they too just be getting on riding around from corner to corner. By them riding around like this they are taken up valuable seats that people who are trying to ride with a purpose cant , sometimes the buses are packed to standing loads not because everyone on there is trying to get some where, it's packed because we got homeless people on there just riding around. When we was collecting fare we had programs to if a person could not afford bus fare they could get a free pass. For example if a person had just got out of jail and they was on parole, there parole officer would have free bus passes that they would give them. What free fare has done was help these people live a lifestyle, not to better them selves . Like the programs we had in place before, the people who got these free passes where people who was trying to change there lives. What free fare did was make it easy for them to not to put forth any effort and they expect everything to be handed to them. Now! not all the homeless people that gets on the bus are this way, but I will say most that do ride are. You want to know why the other county's bailed out? They don't think it's far for there tax payers to be paying for something and the people that are using it, is not putting nothing in. We had the lowest fare in the country and if we was to go back to fare at $2.00 it still will be one of the lowest. Believe it or not but these same people you think can't afford to pay the fare are the same people who be buying these cigarette vapes and beer. We lost a lot of our

riders that use to ride the bus because it was a choice for them, not because they had to. They stopped riding because they don't feel safe, they don't feel comfortable leaving there car at a park and ride because you have homeless people hanging out at the shelter. I had one of my passenger say she stop riding the bus because when she went to work, her job was sending her on drug screening because she would be smelling like weed or beer. Ia'm not even going to go into the smells we have to deal with. Let's not just focus on the homeless, but focus on how to better the community. Because free fare is not it!