Citizens Taking Action for transit dependent riders

www.CTAriders.org

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For Information:

Charles Paidock, Secretary (312) 842-5036, (312) 714-7790 cpaidock@hotmail.com

Kevin Peterson (773) 896-8126 transitcatt@hotmail.com

Study Shows Severely Limited Travel Outside of Rush Hour

CTA Group Seeks to Expand Bus Hours of Operation

Citizens Taking Action, a public transit advocacy organization, did a study of bus hours of operations which showed that service is severely limited outside of the rush hour. Thirty-nine (39) bus routes cease running during the early evening, and another forty-four (44) stop running in the late evening. Out of a total of 125 routes, only seventeen (17) buses run a full twenty-four (24) hours, and most of these on routes which are shorter than those of daytime operations.

Only two L lines operate at all times every day, the Red and the Blue lines. ​

The group is particularly concerned about passengers who may end up stranded because they might have missed the last bus, and have no way to get home.  Travel options are either limited, or non-existent, for anyone who works a second or third shift, such as in retail stores or restaurants, or in a hospital.  Statistically, only about one-third is the transit system is left in operation late at night, and then shuts down almost entirely.  An added concern is that most passengers transfer at least once in getting home, so making connections can be crucial.  Large segments of the city, such as the far south side, have no late service whatsoever.

Arguments have been advanced that the "system is paid for by the rush hour," and therefore reduced levels of passengers at off-peak times is no costly burden on the transit system.

Charles Paidock, Co-Director of the group, stated that:  "It's not uncommon to go to an event, and then have no way to get home after it's over.  The fact that there are no two bus schedules which are the same, in the entire system, makes planning a trip somewhat complicated.  Mis-read a schedule and you could easily end up waiting for a bus which will never come, since you missed the last one.  CTA has been making so-called "service adjustments" for a number of years, the result of which is that we are left with a skeleton of a transit system.  The needs of off-peak passenger are equal to those who use it during the rush hour only."

Keven Peterson, Co-Director of the group, added that:  "These travel restrictions hit heavily on anyone who works in a retail store, many which close now at 9:00 PM, or in a restaurant, club or theater, which closes even later.  These people rely on tips to make a living, and cannot afford to own a car, or pay cab fare.  Their need for public transit is genuine."

The organization is contacting the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), CTA board members and officers, as well as elected officials, requesting that service be restored or expanded on a number of critical routes.