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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\***

**Supervisors Breed and Wiener Launch Pilot Program to Test a New Light Rail Seating Configuration**

*Month-long pilot could help address crowding issues on Muni*

**San Francisco**—The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), which oversees all surface transportation in the city, including the Municipal Railway (Muni), joined Supervisors London Breed (District 5) and Scott Wiener (District 8) to greet riders as the new light rail vehicle seating pilot launched. As part of the agency's work to improve Muni's speed and reliability, this pilot will determine if a new seating configuration will improve the rider experience by addressing capacity and overcrowding.

"I am proud to have developed this pilot seat project with Supervisor Wiener, and I thank the MTA for working closely with us to bring it to fruition. This design will create more space for Muni riders, who are too often forced to wedge onto full trains or wait at the station in hope for room on the next one. The MTA, I, and others are working hard to secure over 200 new trains. In the meantime, I am committed to doing everything possible to help Muni riders, and I look forward to hearing directly from them about this pilot design," said Supervisor Breed.

"Muni is over-capacity, particularly our light rail vehicle lines," said Supervisor Scott Wiener, who worked with Supervisor Breed and MTA to advocate for the seat configuration. "As our population grows, it will be challenging to accommodate Muni's growing ridership. Until we have enough light rail vehicles, we need to be creative and resourceful in making sure there's enough room on these vehicles for people to board. This modest seat reconfiguration, which will create more standing room while allowing those who need a seat to sit, is a great short-term solution for Muni's ongoing crowding problem."

The train has been reconfigured to replace 14 double-wide seats with single-wide seats. This will increase floor space for 26 standing passengers, resulting in a net increase of at least 10 passengers. Trains can hold approximately two standees for each seat removed. The pilot train will be deployed for one month on the N Judah from Monday, May 19<sup>th</sup> to Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup> and on the L Taraval from Monday, June 2 to Friday, June 13.

"Our system is over capacity and our trains are crowded," said John Haley, Director of Transit Operations for Muni. "Until we can purchase additional light rail vehicles that could be made possible by sustainable funding through upcoming ballot measures, we have to be creative about how we address the challenges our riders are faced with every single day. Along with other ideas to address crowding, including the NX Express and three-car shuttles, this pilot holds the potential to provide further relief for our riders."

During the pilot, SFMTA will count and survey passengers to gather data about capacity and passenger opinions, which will influence future decision-making. For more information and to take the survey, please visit: [www.sfmta.com/SeatingPilot](http://www.sfmta.com/SeatingPilot).

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*Established by voter proposition in 1999, the SFMTA, a department of the City and County of San Francisco, oversees the Municipal Railway (Muni), parking and traffic, bicycling, walking and taxis. With five modes of transit, Muni has approximately 700,000 passenger boardings each day. Over 1 million people get around this city each day and rely on the SFMTA to ensure safe and reliable travel by transit, walking, bicycling, taxi and driving.*

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