Seattle Central Hosts Critical Community Transit Forum Jan. 16

Seattle Central Community College's Student Leadership will host a Community Forum on Public Transportation on Thursday, Jan. 16, to discuss the current state and future status of public transportation in the greater Seattle-King County metro area. The event is open to the public, and individuals in the community concerned about transit issues are encouraged to attend.

Students organized the forum in response to the proposed 17 percent cut in service to King County Metro Transit. "We feel this event will be an excellent way for people in the community to voice their concerns. Our goal is to send a message to the legislature that we need reliable transit service, and that lawmakers need to work together to find a resolution," said Leah Remsen, president of Seattle Central's Associated Student Council.

The forum (two sessions will be held) will begin with a presentation by the Transit Riders Union outlining the issues, followed by a panel discussion – addressing critical issues and potential solutions – and a question and answer session.

> 'The bottom line is that these cuts have the potential to make a college education less accessible for people in the community who need it most'

Seattle Central, whose campus is located in the urban neighborhood of Capitol Hill near downtown, is particularly dependent on reliable transit service. Out of necessity, many of its students and employees regularly use King County Metro's bus service to commute to and from their classes and jobs. Each year, the college distributes ORCA cards to approximately 6,000 students and 400 employees (representing about half of its workforce).

The cuts to transit service, which would affect many of the routes serving campus, will result in much longer commutes, forcing students to spend more time on or waiting for the bus, and less time able to study or work. This may prove to be an insurmountable barrier for many who have work and family obligations.

"We're very concerned about this proposed reduction in service," said President Paul T. Killpatrick, Ph.D. "The bottom line is that these cuts have the potential to make a college education less accessible for people in the community who need it most."

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