

# La Opinión

## Editorial

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Los Angeles

# The MTA Appeal

Los Angeles is not a city that is known for having a great public transportation system. The urgency of an adequate service is big, especially for this metropolis. Fortunately, the system is improving. Unfortunately the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), who is unwilling to prioritize the availability of buses that are so necessary, makes each advancement reluctantly.

In this how we interpret the recent decision of the MTA to appeal the by Special Master Donald T. Bliss which urged the purchase of 145 buses to comply with the judicial order that reigns over the transportation agency. Bliss, who is in charge of overseeing the compliance of the agreement, also said that the right measures had not been taken to prevent overcrowding as stipulated by the agreement and that 370,000 thousand additional hours should be added to the service.

The MTA board, in a divided vote, and with marked absences, chose to dispute the order. In this case it looked for refuge once again in the court of judge Terry J. Hatter, who is in charge of executing the judicial

order. Hatter supported the MTA (in 1999) reducing an order from Bliss from 481 buses to 248. The MTA asserted that the costs, for the purchase of the amount of new buses and additional service being ordered are too high.

In the past, the MTA has prioritized the Metro services and light rail. This public transportation philosophy is good but incomplete if it is not maintained along with equal bus service. The agency also has made changes in bus routes to make them more efficient. Today the

bus riders' experience is not positive. There are more complaints each day because of the long waits at the bus stops and the overcrowding, as it has been colorfully described by some of the bus riders – the buses

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look like sardine cans.

The light rail system is fast but of limited reach. Los Angeles needs the flexibility that only the buses can provide. It's sad that the MTA's appeal will delay the start of circulation of buses that are indispensable today. The goal of the MTA should be to serve its customers better and not oppose the customer's essential need for more buses.