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# PRESS RELEASE

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## **VRE Extends Purchase Deadline for Discounted Amtrak Step-Up Tickets**

**Alexandria, Va.** – To allow riders to continue commuting via Amtrak until Metrorail reopens its six stations south of National Airport and returns to full service, Virginia Railway Express (VRE) is extending the discounted purchase of Step-up tickets through September 30. Sales of the reduced-price tickets were to have expired August 31. A Step-up ticket allows passengers with multi-ride tickets (Monthly, 5-Day, 10-Ride, and Transit Link Card) to use any of the 12 Amtrak trains listed on VRE's schedule. VRE, in partnership with Virginia's Department of Rail and Public Transportation, reduced the Step-up ticket price from \$8 to \$4 in May to free up space on its trains for Metrorail riders during platform reconstruction work at Blue and Yellow line stations.

Sales of Amtrak Step-up tickets increased leading into and through Metrorail's summer station shutdown. Between May 1 and July 31, the last date for which data is available, Step-up ticket sales rose 11 percent on VRE's Fredericksburg Line and 13 percent systemwide, compared to the same days in 2018. VRE ridership also increased. The number of passenger trips on the Fredericksburg Line, which often runs parallel to Metro's Blue and Yellow lines, was up 5 percent between Memorial Day and August 24, compared to the same period last year. VRE trains carried nearly 32,000 additional passengers during those 13 weeks than they did during the same weeks in 2018.

Virginia's only commuter rail service, VRE trains run northbound into Washington, D.C. in the morning and southbound along two lines, Fredericksburg and Manassas, in the evening. Trains on both lines stop at Union Station, L'Enfant, Crystal City and Alexandria. Only Fredericksburg Line trains stop at Franconia-Springfield. VRE supports and accepts employer-sponsored transit benefits.

The 12th largest commuter rail service in the U.S., VRE is a transportation partnership of the Northern Virginia and Potomac & Rappahannock Transportation Commissions. VRE's mission is to provide safe, cost effective, accessible, reliable, convenient, and customer responsive commuter-oriented passenger

rail service. The 4.5 million rides the railroad provides annually in Northern Virginia and Washington D.C. remove some 100 million vehicle miles from the region's interstates. Learn more at [www.vre.org](http://www.vre.org).

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