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Hi, I'm Andre Johnson. I've worked for RideKC for 26 years as a bus driver and out of the 26 years the fear of my safe never came into play as much as it does now, when the free fare came about. I know you all want to know what the ridership numbers are, but they are false numbers. All we do now is just ride the homeless around, some of the passengers call the bus a mobile home for the homeless. They ride with no purpose and the purpose of the bus is to get you from point A to B safely, it's not a homeless shelter! They will ride with all their belongings, put them in the seat then they will seat in the seats with their feet up and go to sleep. They will get mad if a passenger asks if they can take their stuff out the seat so they can sit down and if the driver asks they will take it up a notch and start threatening and cussing the driver out. They will ride like this to the end of the route to where the driver will have to ask them to step off the bus and that will cause them to get mad at the driver, leading them to cuss the driver out. Then they will get off, but they will get back on and do the same thing, they will ride back to the other end of the route, to the point that the bus driver has to tell them to catch another bus. This goes on all day every day, when they are on the bus they're harassing other passengers begging for money, smoking, having inappropriate conversation and even sexually harassing the female passengers and even the female bus drivers. We have some homeless people that use wheelchairs, some need it and some don't, they only have it so when they go to the corner to beg it looks better. But it takes maybe 3 minutes to get them on and maybe 2 to get them off, it depends on them. This makes the buses late every time! They too just be getting on riding around from corner to corner. By them riding around like this they are taken up valuable seats that people who are trying to ride with a purpose can't, sometimes the buses are packed to standing loads not because everyone on there is trying to get somewhere, it's packed because we got homeless people on there just riding around. When we were collecting fare we had programs to if a person could not afford bus fare they could get a free pass. For example if a person had just got out of jail and they was on parole, their parole officer would have free bus passes that they would give them. What free fare has done was help these people live a lifestyle, not to better themselves. Like the programs we had in place before, the people who got these free passes were people who were trying to change their lives. What free fare did was make it easy for them to not put forth any effort and they expect everything to be handed to them. Now! Not all the homeless people that get on the bus are this way, but I will say most that do ride are. You want to know why the other county's bailed out? They don't think it's fair for their tax payers to be paying for something and the people that are using it, is not putting anything in. We had the lowest fare in the country and if we were to go back to fare at \$2.00 it still will be one of the lowest. Believe it or not but these same people you think can't afford to pay the fare are the same people who are buying these cigarette vapes and beer. We lost a lot of our

riders that use to ride the bus because it was a choice for them, not because they had to. They stopped riding because they don't feel safe, they don't feel comfortable leaving there car at a park and ride because you have homeless people hanging out at the shelter. I had one of my passenger say she stop riding the bus because when she went to work, her job was sending her on drug screening because she would be smelling like weed or beer. I'm not even going to go into the smells we have to deal with. Let's not just focus on the homeless, but focus on how to better the community. Because free fare is not it!