



December 11, 2020

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
 President-Elect
 United States of America
 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
 Speaker of the House
 United States House of Representatives
 H-232, The Capitol
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
 Minority Leader
 United States House of Representatives
 H-204, The Capitol
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
 Majority Leader
 United States Senate
 S-230, The Capitol
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
 Minority Leader
 United States Senate
 S-221, The Capitol
 Washington, DC 20510

President-Elect Biden, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

Our coalition of transit, labor, business, local governments, infrastructure, environmental and social justice leaders respectfully **urges you to provide at least \$32 billion in new funding to transit agencies nationwide, inclusive of no less than \$3.1 billion for California's transit agencies to address their operating budget shortfalls resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Transit agencies statewide have seen steep declines in ridership and revenues due to the pandemic-induced economic downturn, putting immense strain on operating budgets. As a result, they have been forced to dramatically reduce or suspend services and have begun, in some cases, to delay much needed infrastructure investments.

California's public transit agencies need **\$3.1 billion in funding relief *this year (through December 2021)*** to address their immediate operational needs and to prevent service reductions from becoming permanent. A viable public transit network is necessary to help support essential and frontline workers as well as communities disproportionately hurt by the pandemic, to protect strong and healthy communities, avoid the loss of thousands of good-paying local jobs, and to support a balanced economic recovery.

Surveys have found that the majority of Californians who continue to rely on transit during the pandemic are using the service to get to work, are overwhelmingly low-income and/people of color, and lack access to a personal vehicle. Reduced transit service disproportionately harms these communities, making it more difficult for them to provide for their families and threatening the health of local economies.

Transit agencies themselves have significant impacts on local economies. The California Transit Association estimates that more than 35,000 Californians are directly employed by transit agencies, but many agencies are considering or have already made cuts to personnel due to the severe budget shortfalls. Should these cuts continue, consumer spending would drop, leading to job losses in other sectors and further perpetuating the pandemic-induced economic downturn.

These agencies are also weighing other cuts, including delaying capital improvement projects and transit vehicle procurements, and deferring payments to contractors, as operating budget shortfalls place new pressure on capital budgets. These cuts will compromise the condition of transit assets, undermine the role of California's transit agencies in meeting our state's environmental goals, slow the deployment of zero-emission buses, and result in job losses in construction as well as domestic and California-based manufacturing. Without additional support for transit operations, the economic impacts from a transit agency's failure will be widespread.

Ensuring California's public transit agencies can continue to provide essential service and invest in capital projects is critical to a balanced economic recovery, our quality of life, and to achieving our state's ambitious environmental goals.

Please help us save local public transit.

Sincerely,

Michael Pimentel, Deputy Executive Director
California Transit Association

Tim Elder, President
National Federation of the Blind California

Michael Quigley, Executive Director
California Alliance for Jobs

Shane Gusman, Director
California Teamsters Public Affairs Council

Bill Higgins, Executive Director
California Association of Councils of Government (CALCOG)

Shane Gusman, Legislative Advocate
California Conference Board of the Amalgamated Transit Union

Nancy McPherson, State Director
AARP California

Kiana Valentine, Executive Director
Transportation California

Rick L. Callender, President
California – Hawaii State Conference NAACP

Louie Costa, Director
California State Legislative Board SMART-Transportation Division

Denny Zane, Executive Director
MoveLA

Eileen Wenger Tutt, Executive Director
California Electric Transportation Coalition

Julian Canete, President & CEO
California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce

Colin Fiske, Executive Director
Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities

Jason Baker, Vice President, Transportation, Housing & Community Development
Silicon Valley Leadership Group

Ruben Guerra, President and Chair
Latin Business Association

Gwen Litvak, Senior Vice President
Bay Area Council

Jonathon Kass, Interim Transportation Policy Director
SPUR

Jessica Lall, President & CEO
Central City Association – Los Angeles

John Hake, Executive Director
Rebuild SoCal Partnership

Dr. Tecoy Porter, President
National Action Network Sacramento

Mike Woodman, Chair
North State Super Region

Barbara Leslie, Chamber President/CEO
Oakland Chamber of Commerce

Jack Swearingen, Chair
Friends of SMART

Bee Mittermiller, Public Policy Team Co-Chair
350 San Diego

Darnell Grisby, Executive Director
TransForm

Glenda Marsh, Steering Committee
Sacramento Metro Advocates for Rail and Transportation

Jacklyn Montgomery, Executive Director
California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalACT)

Richard Marcantonio, Managing Attorney
Public Advocates, inc.

Jay King, President
California Black Chamber of Commerce

Adrian Martinez, Staff Attorney, Right to Zero
Earthjustice

Alberto Ayala, PhD, MSE, Executive Director and Air Pollution Control Officer
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

Maria S. Salinas, President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

Michael Lawson, President & CEO
Los Angeles Urban League

Colin Parent, Executive Director & General Counsel
Circulate San Diego

Stuart Waldman, President
Valley Industry & Commerce Association

Brandon Black, Director of Public Policy
Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce

Laura Raymond, Director
Alliance for Community Transit Los Angeles

Barry Broome, President & CEO
Greater Sacramento Economic Council

Brian Ling, Executive Director
Sonoma County Alliance

Pat Fong Kushida, President & CEO
Sacramento Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce

Bill Manis, President & CEO
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership

Dave Campbell, Advocacy Director
Bike East Bay

CC: Members and Staff, United States Congress
The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor, State of California
David Kim, Secretary, California State Transportation Agency
Phil Washington, Lead, Department of Transportation - Agency Review Team; CEO, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Therese McMillan, Member, Department of Transportation - Agency Review Team; Executive Director, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Toks Omishakin, Member, Department of Transportation – Agency Review Team; Director, California Department of Transportation