

National Campaign Transit Justice

A project of just|strategy

June 30, 2023

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development,
and Related Agencies
2358A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development,
and Related Agencies
2358A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brian Schatz
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development,
and Related Agencies
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development,
and Related Agencies
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member Quigley and Chairman Schatz and Ranking Member Hyde-Smith,

As the appropriations season gets underway, we write to you today to urgently ask you to keep the promise of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) throughout the Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations process, particularly when it comes to programs that make transit more affordable and accessible.

With great economic uncertainty throughout our economy, and OPEC+ cutting back on output, public transit is more important than ever. Public transit is not only an engine for economic growth and jobs; it is also an important bulwark against our dependence on foreign oil.

High-quality public transit has the potential to significantly reduce the number of vehicle miles driven on our nation's roads, resulting in decreased traffic congestion, air pollution, and carbon

emissions. When public transit is readily available, Americans have a wider range of mobility choices which increases access to essentials like healthcare services, health food, education, jobs, and opportunities for civic engagement. Investing in better, faster, more reliable public transit service will result in better public health outcomes and will substantially ease the task of moving to a zero-emissions transportation system.

At this critical moment, the IIJA gives cities and states the ability to expand public transit options, replace thousands of deficient transit vehicles, including buses, with clean, zero-emission vehicles, and improve accessibility for the elderly and people with disabilities. But that is not possible unless Congress fulfills its promise to the American public and fully funds the vital programs contained in the bill.

We particularly urge you to fund:

FTA's Capital Investment Grants Program (CIG): The Capital Investment Grant program is a competitive grant that can fund capital improvements to both large and small transit systems. The IIJA funds CIG at \$4.6 billion per year, with \$1.6 billion of that coming as advance appropriations and \$3 billion to be appropriated annually. We ask that Congress fund the program at its full \$4.6 billion via the FY24 appropriations process.

RAISE and MEGA Competitive Grant Programs: The Rebuilding America's Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program, formerly known as BUILD and TIGER, funds a diverse array of capital improvements in surface transportation projects and has been an important source of support for transit and safe walking or bike access to transit. The new National Infrastructure Project Assistance (MEGA) program will provide grants on a competitive basis to support projects of national and regional significance, including transit, which will help provide new multimodal transportation options in areas currently lacking them. The IIJA guarantees \$1.5 billion to RAISE but authorizes Congress to add \$1.5 billion in annual appropriations as well as \$2 billion for MEGA. We ask that Congress fund the combined RAISE and MEGA line item at its full \$3.5 billion, in addition to the funding guaranteed in the infrastructure law.

Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP): The ATIIP was created in the IIJA as a competitive grant program that could fund the construction of safe and connected active transportation (biking and walking) infrastructure to key destinations within and between communities. Such investments are essential to retrofit dangerous roadways to provide safe access to transit service. The law authorized the program to receive \$200 million annually, but did not provide any of that as advance appropriations. Given the high demand for this investment in communities across the country, we ask that Congress fully fund the ATIIP at \$500 million as proposed in the Connecting America's Active Transportation System Act (S.684/H.R.2991).

Public transit is our route to a more prosperous, equitable, healthy, and sustainable future. Public transit is our route to equitable economic growth and jobs. But that cannot be

accomplished without full funding for programs that fund transit projects and efforts to improve access to transit. We cannot afford to miss this historic opportunity and need Congress to fulfill the promise it made in the IJA.

Sincerely,

10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania	Environment Massachusetts
1000 Friends of Oregon	Environment New Jersey
350 Milwaukee	Environment Oregon
Active San Gabriel Valley	Environment Texas
Alaska Environment	Environment Virginia
Alliance for a Just Society	Environment Washington
America Walks	Evergreen Action
Arizona PIRG	Farm&City
Bike Durham	Florida PIRG
BikeLA (formerly the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition)	Genesis
CALPIRG	Georgia PIRG
Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT)	Greater Cleveland Immigrant Support Network
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance	GreenLatinos
Clean Energy Action	Illinois PIRG
Clevelanders for Public Transit	Indivisible Colorado
Colorado Dem. Party - Energy and Environment Initiative	Investing in Place
Coalition for Smarter Growth	Iowa PIRG
Communities Actively Living Independent & Free	IRTF Cleveland
Commuters Take Action	LA Forward
ConnPIRG	Labor Network for Sustainability
CoPIRG	League of Conservation Voters (LCV)
CultureHouse	Madison Area Bus Advocates
Cuyahoga County Progressive Caucus	Maryland PIRG
Day One	Massachusetts Action for Justice
Denver Streets Partnership	MASSPIRG
East Metro Strong	MoPIRG
Empower Our Future	Move California
Environment America	Move Minnesota
Environment California	MOVE Ohio
Environment Colorado	National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)
Environment Connecticut	National Campaign for Transit Justice
Environment Georgia	Native Organizers Alliance
Environment Illinois	NCPIRG
Environment Maryland	NHPIRG
	NJPIRG

NMPIRG
No More Freeways
NRDC
Ohio PIRG
One Fair Wage
OPAWL - Building AAPI Feminist
Leadership
OSPIRG
Our Revolution Mahoning Valley
PennEnvironment
PennPIRG
PeopleForBikes
PIRGIM
Pittsburghers for Public Transit
Rail Passengers Association
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
RI Transit Riders
RIPIRG
Sam Pollock Club of Toledo
San Francisco Transit Riders
San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council
Seamless Bay Area
Sierra Club
SOBE Concerned Citizens
Southwest Energy Efficiency Project
StreetsPAC
Sustain Charlotte
Sustainable Claremont
TexPIRG
The Street Trust
Together for Brothers
TransForm CA
Transit Alliance Miami
Transit Forward Philadelphia
Transit Riders for the US Together (TRUST)
TransitMatters
Transportation for America
Transportation Riders United
Tri-State Transportation Campaign
U.S. PIRG
Virginia Organizing
WakeUP Wake County
Wall of Women
WashPIRG
WISPIRG
Womxn From The Mountain