

National Campaign Transit Justice

A project of just|strategy

Week Without Driving Message Guidance

TOPLINE MESSAGE:

Transit is essential, providing everyone with a clean and affordable way to get around. Transit drives economic growth and opportunities and is a critical tool for addressing the climate crisis. But for too long, our policymakers haven't prioritized funding for transit, choosing to spend the vast majority of our transportation dollars on roads. As a result, in much of the country it's incredibly difficult—if not impossible—to get around without a car.

This September, we can raise awareness of these transportation inequities by participating in the Week Without Driving challenge. Week Without Driving challenges us to leave our cars at home for a week to see what it's like for the $\frac{1}{3}$ of Americans who can't or don't drive. Anyone can participate in the challenge - whether as an individual, organization, or elected official. I/we am/are doing this challenge because [share your story].

By participating in Week Without Driving and raising our voices together about the need for better transit options, we can create a system that gets everyone where they need to go, regardless of ability, age, or income.

SUPPORTING POINTS:

- Transit is a driver of economic growth, jobs, and opportunity. Nationally, tens of millions of people in the U.S.—from small rural towns to major urban centers—rely on public transit to get to work every day, generating trillions of dollars in economic activity. Every dollar invested in transit offers a 5-to-1 return, and every \$1 billion invested in public transit produces 50,000 jobs. Transit agencies are often among the largest employers in their cities.
- Nearly a third of people living in the United States – people with disabilities, young people, seniors, and people who can't afford cars or gas - don't drive. We

must fund and improve transportation options supporting their mobility and independence.

- The COVID pandemic and recovery forever changed how communities function, work, socialize, and commute. It also dramatically showed that public transit is essential to our communities, local economies, and the lives of millions of people across the country. Essential workers depend on and operate transit, small businesses depend on transit, and historically marginalized communities depend on transit. Transit is a key component of economic recovery and a more environmentally sustainable society, and it's a road to equity for disconnected communities—rural, urban, and suburban.
- The climate crisis is not coming; it is here now, and it's getting worse by the day. We've seen it all around us on a near daily basis. It is impacting our economy and nearly every aspect of our daily lives. Investing in public transit is one of the top ways we can help address the climate crisis on the needed scale.
- The transportation sector is the largest source of U.S. climate pollution — and 80% of transportation emissions come from the [cars and trucks on our roads](#). It's one of the only major sectors where emissions are still [rising](#).
- For far too long, policymakers have prioritized highways and cars over public transit. This has devastating impacts not only on the climate crisis but on the budgets of local transit agencies like ours.
- Policymakers' investment in transit would be a win-win: it would benefit our economy and boost our efforts to address the climate crisis.
- We will use the Week Without Driving to raise our collective voices and ensure that policymakers at the local, state, and national levels hear us and invest in transit.