



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