



February 26, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden Jr.  
United States of America  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

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

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
H-204, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

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

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

Our coalition of transportation, labor, business, infrastructure, environmental and social justice leaders thank you for your strong support for transit agencies nationwide throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The emergency funding provided to transit agencies by Congress last year has helped stave off the most severe service reductions and workforce layoffs, which would have devastated the communities that have continued to rely on transit service during today's public health crisis.

We strongly support H.R. 1319, the "American Rescue Plan Act of 2021," which provides more than \$30 billion in new operational funding to transit agencies nationwide. **This funding level will address the operating needs faced by the industry into 2023. Moreover, as you finalize the next round of emergency relief, we urge you to continue to ensure that California receives its fair share of total funding so that transit agencies of all sizes throughout our state can benefit from the additional operational support.**

This funding is vital to transit agencies operating in rural, urban and suburban settings as they continue to grapple with steep declines in ridership and revenues due to the pandemic-induced economic downturn.

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.

Without additional funding for transit operations, service and workforce cuts that were avoided last year will proceed this year. Moreover, transit agencies will delay capital improvement projects and transit vehicle procurements, and defer payments to contractors. 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.

The emergency funding we request today would establish funding certainty to better allow transit agencies to navigate the crisis.

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, 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**

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**

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**

Barbara Leslie, Chamber President/CEO  
**Oakland Chamber of Commerce**

Jack Swearengen, Chair  
**Friends of SMART**

Darnell Grisby, Executive Director  
**TransForm**

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

Rev. Jonathan Moseley, Western Regional Director  
**National Action Network – Los Angeles**

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**

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:** California Congressional Delegation  
The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chair, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, United States House of Representatives  
The Honorable Sherrod Brown, Chair, Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, United States Senate  
Pete Buttigieg, Secretary, United States Department of Transportation  
Nuria Fernandez, Acting Administrator, Federal Transit Administration  
The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor, State of California  
The Honorable Lena Gonzalez, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee, California State Senate  
The Honorable Laura Friedman, Chair, Assembly Transportation Committee, California State Assembly  
David Kim, Secretary, California State Transportation Agency, State of California  
Members, Executive Committee, California Transit Association  
Members, Federal Legislative Committee, California Transit Association  
Members, COVID-19 Transit Crisis Relief Task Force, California Transit Association