



May 15, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California

The Honorable Toni G. Atkins
Senate President Pro Tempore
California State Senate

The Honorable Anthony Rendon
Speaker of the Assembly
California State Assembly

Dear Governor Newsom, President Pro Tempore Atkins, and Speaker Rendon:

The undersigned write to express our support for the recommendations outlined in the budget request letter from the California Transit Association dated April 25, 2023, and underscore the importance of supporting public transportation as a lifeline that keeps our population and economy moving. We represent the transit agencies and county transportation commissions in Southern California. We serve more than 20 million people from San Diego to Santa Barbara. In total, our population is more than one-half of the State's population, and our combined economies would rank as the 15th largest in the world.

Public transportation is critical to mobility in our region and essential to supporting our economy. It plays a crucial role in achieving our shared climate goals by providing a clean alternative to single-occupancy vehicle travel. High quality public transportation will be critical to the State's prosperity as people return to the offices, as we add increased housing, and as we plan for and implement services to support the 2028 Olympics.

As you know, transit agencies across the State are facing significant financial challenges now and in the future. Southern California transit agencies have a long tradition of working together to achieve common goals. Our agencies have taken a responsible approach to addressing this issue, while recognizing the economic challenges that the state faces. We ask that you work with us to address the immediate funding needs of public transit by providing multi-year support from funding sources that have historically supported public transit. Your support will ensure that all transit agencies in California are sustainable. By ensuring the long-term viability of public transit, we will uphold our mutual sustainability goals and provide improved mobility for Southern Californians who rely on our system.

During the pandemic, it became abundantly clear that public transportation is a lifeline service for many residents. The economy relied on essential workers, and essential workers relied on transit. While we are now well-prepared to address the changes coming out of the pandemic, we experienced significantly increased operating costs during this period. Although we received assistance from the federal government to augment operating budgets, federal assistance has ended, and the costs remain. We continue to focus our efforts towards increasing ridership, decreasing congestion, and improving the well-being of our patrons. With your support, we can secure the funding our systems need to remain sustainable.

The provisions detailed in the California Transit Association's budget request (attached) were developed through a consensus-building process involving transit agencies across the State. All agencies involved in this process have endorsed the Association's approach.

On behalf of our agencies and those who ride our systems, we want to stress the importance of a reliable, sustainable, and equitable public transit system. We, the undersigned, ask for your support in securing direct ongoing multi-year financial support that will help us avoid significant service reductions in the near future.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer
Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority



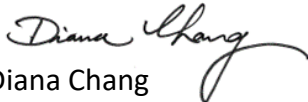
Erin Rogers
Chief Executive Officer/General Manager
OmniTrans



Martin J. Tompkins
Executive Director/CEO
Antelope Valley Transit Authority



Darrell Johnson
Chief Executive Officer
Orange County Transportation Authority



Diana Chang
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North County Transit District

Martin Erickson

Martin Erickson
Executive Director
Ventura County Transportation Commission

ATTACHMENT: California Transit Association – Budget Request Letter Dated April 25, 2023