



September 16, 2009

The Honorable Christopher J. Dodd
Chairman
Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Dodd:

I write on behalf of the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) more than 1,500 member organizations to express strong support for S.1619, the "Livable Communities Act of 2009." APTA has long promoted public transportation as a key component of fostering sustainable communities. We are pleased that the bill proposes innovative policy changes to align transportation and housing programs and offers valuable grant funding for the expansion of public transportation and other critical activities that encourage sustainable development.

We are encouraged by the legislation's establishment of an Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities within the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In addition, we applaud the creation of the Interagency Council on Sustainable Communities, which will match the resources of HUD with the expertise at both the Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency. These new entities will help develop more effective federal policies toward housing and transportation.

With regard to funding, the Comprehensive Planning Grant Program provides much needed resources to ensure that community and regional planning is a comprehensive interdisciplinary process that incorporates transportation, housing, energy, and environmental considerations. Meanwhile, the funds available through the Challenge Grant Program will assist in bringing sustainable development projects to fruition by providing funding for transit-oriented development, public transit infrastructure and facilities, and other important community improvements.

Thank you for introducing this important legislation and for your efforts to recognize transit's integral role in developing sustainable communities.

Sincerely yours,

William Millar
President

WM/tjj

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