

APTA Message Guide: Public Transportation and the American Economy

As Congress considers the 2026 Surface Transportation Authorization Act, your voice is essential to ensure sustained Federal investment in public transportation.

When meeting with lawmakers, emphasize the economic benefits of public transit and passenger rail—and the industries, communities, and workers they support.

Below are APTA’s recommended messages and proof points.

Main Message

Public transportation is one of the best investments America can make.

- **Every \$1 invested returns \$5 to the U.S. economy.**
- Public transportation drives American infrastructure and manufacturing, supports good-paying jobs, and helps families thrive.
- It’s a **\$102 billion industry** that employs more than **450,000 people** and creates millions of private-sector jobs in all 50 States.

We must ensure the 2026 Surface Transportation Authorization Act keeps America’s economy moving.

Supporting Messages

Infrastructure	Manufacturing	Affordability	Innovation
Public transit is more than buses and trains. It’s advanced technologies, high skills, and American-made products that spur productivity, efficiency, and local economies. The economic benefits extend beyond any single bus route or rail line, even to communities with limited transit services.	American workers at 3,000 companies in more than 1,700 communities in all 50 States are making the parts that go into modern buses and railcars. 77% of Federal transit dollars flow to American companies , supporting manufacturers, small suppliers, and workers across the country.	As the cost of living rises and household budgets tighten, families who choose public transit can save up to \$13,000 a year compared to owning a car—leaving more money for rent, groceries, and other everyday needs.	Investing in public transportation supports high skills and specialized expertise that increase the nation’s productivity and keep us competitive. American workers design, engineer, build, and maintain the next generation of innovative, advanced vehicles and high-tech systems.

Resources

- [APTA Industry Footprint](#): Find the public transit agencies and businesses in your State or community.
- [2026 Economic Impact Report Infographic](#): Find the key statistics on the economic impact of investing in public transit.
- [Bus](#) and [Railcar](#) Manufacturing Schematics: See where public transit components are produced in your State.