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PUBLIC
TRANSPORTATION
ASSOCIATION

September 16, 2022

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The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
S-146A, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Brian Schatz
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development, and
Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
S-146A, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development, and
Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chair Schatz, and Ranking Member Collins,

On behalf of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), which represents an \$80 billion industry that directly employs 450,000 people and supports millions of private-sector jobs, **I write to urge you to appropriate at least \$129 million of emergency appropriations to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Public Transportation Emergency Relief program (49 U.S.C. § 5324) to help public transit agencies offset the significant costs of providing emergency transportation services, rebuilding damaged infrastructure, and replacing vehicles destroyed from recent natural disasters, including floods, hurricanes, wildfires, and earthquakes.**

Over the past three weeks, APTA conducted a survey of public transit agencies and identified at least **\$129 million** of unmet funding needs from agencies responding to and recovering from recent natural disasters. For instance, last month, President Biden

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declared a major disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (FEMA-4665-DR-MO) in Missouri for severe storms and flooding that severely impacted the St. Louis region. The July 2022 flooding caused approximately \$40.4 million of damage to the Bi-State Development Metrolink public transit system, including destroying a light rail vehicle, two station elevators, and a signal house. The flooding also severely damaged five miles of light rail track bed and communications, signal, and fiber optics systems housed in two communications rooms and four signal houses. In addition, other public transit agencies have reported \$89 million in damages to their transit systems as a result of recent natural disasters.

In response to prior natural disasters, such as Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria or the Alaska Earthquake, Congress has provided emergency funding to help public transit agencies respond to and recover from natural disasters. Accordingly, we urge you to provide at least **\$129 million** of emergency appropriations to FTA's Public Transportation Emergency Relief program to offset public transit agencies' significant costs for disaster response, recovery, and rebuilding activities.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please have your staff contact Ward McCarragher, Vice President, Government Affairs and Advocacy, at wmccarragher@apta.com or 202.819.4895.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Paul P. Skoutelas
President and CEO