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PUBLIC
TRANSPORTATION
ASSOCIATION**

May 13, 2019

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PRESIDENT AND CEO

Paul P. Skoutelas

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

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
186 Dirksen SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby, Ranking Member Leahy, Chairman Collins, and Ranking Member Reed:

On behalf of America's public transportation industry, which contributes \$71 billion to the U.S. economy, directly employs 430,000 workers, and supports millions of private-sector jobs, I write to urge you to build upon the critical infrastructure investments included in the 2018 and 2019 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Appropriations Acts (P.L. 115-141, Division L; P.L. 116-6, Division G) and further increase funding for public transportation and passenger rail in fiscal year (FY) 2020.

The 2018 and 2019 THUD Appropriations Acts are helping improve public transit service, safety, and capacity, all while chipping away at the more than \$90 billion transit state-of-good-repair backlog. We urge you to build upon this commitment and further address the critical public transit and passenger rail infrastructure needs facing the nation.

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

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development
and Related Agencies
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The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
The Honorable Patrick Leahy
The Honorable Susan M. Collins
The Honorable Jack Reed
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We urge you to provide appropriations for federal transit programs authorized by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) (P.L. 114-94) at the highest possible levels. In particular, we request that you continue to fund State of Good Repair and Bus and Bus Facilities grants above FAST Act levels. These investments support the national transportation network and are critical to main street businesses—87 percent of trips taken on public transportation directly impact the economy.

We also urge you to fund Capital Investment Grants (CIG) at or above the FY 2019 appropriation. Furthermore, we request that the Committee on Appropriations continue to include the provisions requiring the Federal Transit Administration to advance qualified CIG projects through the Full Funding Grant Agreement process, obligate at least 85 percent of the funds by a specific date, and prohibit implementation of the new policies outlined in the June 29, 2018 Federal Transit Administration Dear Colleague letter and changes to the Risk Assessment process.

In addition, we request that you continue to provide increased federal funding for commuter, intercity, and high-speed passenger rail service. We urge you to fund the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) and Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair grants at or above the FY 2019 appropriation. Safety is the public transportation industry's top priority and we request that you enable commuter railroads to be eligible for these programs and use these grants for implementation, operations, and maintenance of positive train control (PTC) technology. To date, the cost to commuter railroads of full implementation of PTC is estimated to be approximately \$4 billion. In addition, this multi-billion-dollar investment does not include future operating and maintenance costs of PTC, currently estimated to cost up to \$130 million per year. Our national passenger rail network with connections to other modes of public transportation expands mobility options and is essential to economic growth. APTA urges Congress to fully fund CRISI, Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair, Restoration and Enhancement, and Amtrak grant programs.

Moreover, we urge you to fund BUILD (TIGER) grants at or above the FY 2019 appropriation. We also encourage you to continue the 2019 THUD Appropriations Act provisions that require that the U.S. Department of Transportation ensure equitable geographic distribution of the funds (e.g., one-half of the funding must be awarded for grants in large urbanized areas) and investment in a variety of transportation modes. A well-funded, multi-modal BUILD grant program can and should support critical transit projects that reduce congestion, improve safety, and increase economic competitiveness.

Finally, we urge you to fully appropriate authorized funding for research, workforce development, and technical assistance. We also request that you continue to provide critical funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to ensure safe, efficient, and reliable transportation in our nation's capital.

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
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Thank you for your strong support for public transportation and consideration of our priorities for FY 2020 THUD appropriations. We look forward to continuing to work with you to improve public transportation and benefit the nation.

Sincerely,



Paul P. Skoutelas
President and CEO

cc: Members of the Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. Senate