



Amalgamated Transit Union

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Office of the International President

June 15, 2020

Memorandum in Support INVEST in America Act

Dear Representative:

The Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), the largest union representing transit workers in North America, strongly supports the *Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation in America* (INVEST in America) Act, the new House proposal for the reauthorization of the FAST ACT.

Past surface transportation bills have followed the same basic blueprint: increased funding to meet growing capital needs. While this bill also provides critical funding for surface transportation infrastructure, including \$105 billion for public transportation, ATU and its members are especially grateful that Chairman DeFazio and his team in this bill focused heavily on investment in “Human Capital,” -- the knowledge, talents, skills, abilities, experience, intelligence, training, judgment, and especially the safety of the frontline transit workforce.

As we have been reporting to you for several years, transit worker assault has become an epidemic across America. The INVEST in America Act is the vaccine that we have been searching for -- including the core elements of the bipartisan *Transit Worker and Pedestrian Protection Act* (H.R.1139). We are so grateful for each of the nearly 200 Members of Congress -- especially lead sponsors Representatives Napolitano and Katko -- who cosponsored this critical legislation and pushed hard for its inclusion in the new surface transportation bill. By doing so, you will save countless lives.

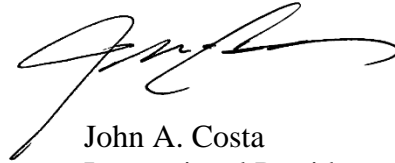
The INVEST in America Act also includes H.R. 6478, the *Public Transit Safety Program Improvement Act* (introduced by Reps. Brown, Malinowski, and Lynch), critical legislation which finally recognizes that workers have an important and equal role to play in the development of transit safety plans.

Finally, the groundbreaking *National Transit Workforce Training Act of 2020* (H.R. 6575), another key proposal introduced by Representative Brown and an equal number of both Democrats and Republicans, was also incorporated into the reauthorization bill. ATU and other transit unions are

joined by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) in a true labor-management partnership in support of the establishment of a national transit frontline workforce training center (targeted to both rural and urban transit systems) dedicated to the needs of the frontline workforce through standards-based training in the maintenance and operations occupations. It is long overdue.

While we still agree with the idea that more money makes for better transit, ATU believes that Congress would not be getting its money's worth by simply authorizing billions of dollars for public transportation without taking the necessary steps to address major transit safety and workforce issues. Moreover, it would be missing a huge opportunity to invest in the more than 400,000 people who move America. Simply stated, it's not just how much you invest. Spending taxpayer dollars wisely is equally as important. After all, transit is powered by people. The INVEST in America Act recognizes that addressing the safety, health, security, and workforce development needs of transit workers should be a Congressional priority for the next five years. We urge you to support this groundbreaking legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John A. Costa', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

John A. Costa
International President