



The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio  
Chair  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2165 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2164 Rayburn Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves,

I am writing to express my strong support for the historic levels of bus transit investments included in H.R. 2, the “Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation in America Act” (INVEST in America Act). By helping transit agencies meet a critical need of upgrading and replacing aging buses, this robust funding will ensure we can maintain a level of service that many in our communities depend on to access jobs, health care, education, and other critical destinations.

Buses are the backbone of transit service across America, providing more than one-half of all trips on public transportation. However, largely due to a 57% reduction of federal funding for buses under MAP-21, the amount of buses operating past useful life has increased 48% while buses operating past 15 years increased a staggering 104%. In addition, bus fleet size has shrunk by 22% (16,304 buses) in just four years. It is clear the diversion in resources away from bus programs has taken their toll on transit service.

The INVEST in America Act will help address this challenge by making critical investments for surface transportation infrastructure, including \$105 billion for public transportation overall and over \$9 billion for bus and bus facility infrastructure. In addition to a long-term vision to address the state-of-good-repair backlog in public transit infrastructure, the bill also recognizes the immediate need for public transit agencies to continue to provide essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic and support our nation’s economic recovery.

Overall, the investments into bus infrastructure included in the bill will go a long way toward upgrading and replacing our aging and shrinking bus fleets, boosting economic growth and helping enhance bus service in all communities across the country. We look forward to working collaboratively with you and your colleagues on both sides of the aisle as this bill advances through the legislative process. Thank you for your leadership on these issues.

In Akron, the loyal transit dependent rider is without a doubt the customer we wholeheartedly serve. With your support and the support of all those who represent us, we will continue to build a transit system that helps our community to thrive and be better.

Yours in accessible transportation,



Dawn Distler  
Chief Executive Officer  
METRO Regional Transit Authority

Cc: Congresswoman Marcia Fudge  
Congressman Tim Ryan  
Congressman David Joyce  
Congressman Anthony Gonzalez  
Senator Sherrod Brown  
Senator Rob Portman  
Robert DeJournett, President METRO Board of Trustees



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