



**AMERICAN
PUBLIC
TRANSPORTATION
ASSOCIATION**

February 22, 2018

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHAIR

Nathaniel P. Ford, Sr.

VICE CHAIR

David M. Stackrow, Sr.

SECRETARY-TREASURER

Kim R. Green

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR

Doran J. Barnes

Doug Allen

Lester W. Bryant

Dorval R. Carter, Jr.

Frederick L. Daniels, Jr.

Nuria I. Fernandez

Carolyn Flowers

Freddie C. Fuller II

David A. Genova

Andre Gibson

Andrew Johnson

Adelee Marie Le Grand

Jack Martinson

Bacarra Sanderson

Mauldin

Diana C. Mendes

Brad J. Miller

Jeffrey A. Nelson

Greg Percy

Leanne P. Redden

William T. Thomsen

Jeffrey Wharton

Charles R. Wochele

PRESIDENT AND CEO

Paul P. Skoutelas

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Frelinghuysen, and Ranking Member Lowey:

On behalf of the more than 1,500 member organizations of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), I am encouraged by the recent bipartisan budget agreement that included the promise of significant increases in federal infrastructure investment. As you work to pass Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 appropriations bills before the current Continuing Resolution (CR) expires on March 23, I urge you to recognize the economic and mobility benefits of public transportation for citizens and American businesses across the country. The budget deal provides a real opportunity to invest in programs that support safety for the travelling public and address the transit state-of-good-repair backlog, which is estimated to be \$90 billion by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT).

First, we request appropriations for federal transit programs authorized by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act the highest possible levels. We recommend that programs authorized under the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund that support bus and rail state-of-good-repair receive funding above FAST Act levels. Increased appropriations would reduce costs from deferred maintenance and revitalize public transportation infrastructure in urban and rural communities alike.

We urge the Appropriations Committees to fund the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) program at or above the levels authorized in the FAST Act. These funds help transit systems expand and grow to meet the increasing demand for service. Communities across the country are raising state and local funding for well-designed

projects that cannot be developed without the federal partnership. Projects are subjected to a thorough federal review process, but the Administration has proposed deep cuts in the program in its last two budgets, recommending funding for only those projects with existing funding agreements and proposing that “future investments in new transit projects would be funded by localities.”

It is imperative that a final bill includes language reaffirming the importance of the CIG program and directing the Secretary to continue administering it in accordance with the procedural and substantive requirements of current law. Delays in approving projects for federal funding agreements will ultimately drive up the cost of transportation projects that would serve communities throughout the nation, including New Starts, Small Starts, and Core Capacity projects.

Increased federal funding to support commuter, intercity, and high-speed passenger rail service continues to be important for the public transportation industry. Safety is our industry’s top priority. We especially recommend strong funding to support adoption of positive train control (PTC) technology, both for installation and for ongoing maintenance. To date, the cost of full implementation of PTC is estimated to be approximately \$4 billion, which does not take into account future operating and maintenance costs currently estimated to range from \$80 million to \$130 million annually.

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 the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program, the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program, and the Restoration and Enhancement Grant Program and Amtrak programs.

We also urge Congress to fully appropriate authorized funding for research, workforce development, technical assistance, and for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to ensure safe, efficient, and reliable transportation in our nation’s capital.

Thank you for your consideration of our priorities for FY 2018 appropriations. As always, we look forward to continuing to work with Congress on bipartisan legislation to improve our nation’s transportation network by expanding and improving access to public transportation in communities throughout the nation.

Sincerely,



Paul P. Skoutelas
President and CEO

Cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations
Members of the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations