



June 15, 2020

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,

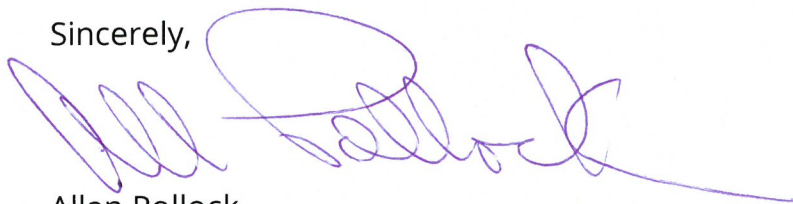
On behalf of Salem Area Mass Transit District (SAMTD), I am writing to express our strong support for H.R. 2, the "Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation in America Act" (INVEST in America Act) and the historic levels of bus transit investments included in this legislation. These investments will provide necessary support for the upgrade and replacement of aging buses, a critical need for SAMTD and other agencies across the country to maintain reliable and quality service for our riders.

Established in 1979, SAMTD is a municipal corporation covering 76 square miles in the Willamette Valley of Oregon between Portland and Salem. Operating as "Cherriots," SAMTD provides service to a population of more than 400,000 residents in Marion and Polk counties with approximately 3.2 million passenger trips annually. Maintaining our fleet in a state of good repair is key to providing quality service to our community. However, SAMTD is facing an ongoing significant bus replacement problem because of the substantial reduction in federal funding for buses in MAP-21 and other factors. This most recent fiscal year, 20 percent of SAMTD's 64 bus fleet were operating past useful life, thus increasing maintenance costs, roadside service calls, and reducing overall service levels.

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. The bill 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. It also provides a long-term vision to address the state-of-good-repair backlog in public transit infrastructure and meet the mobility demands of growing communities like Salem.

Our customers rely on buses daily to access jobs, health care, education, and other critical destinations. The level of investment 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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Allan Pollock", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Allan Pollock
General Manager/CEO

cc: Representative Kurt Schrader