

*Santa Cruz Metropolitan
Transit District*



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 Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO), I write to thank you for your extraordinary leadership and 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). I urge you to increase the authorization from \$5.79 billion to \$24 billion in SEC. 103. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of the INVEST in America Act for fiscal year 2021.

The INVEST in America Act makes critical investments for surface transportation infrastructure, including appropriating \$5.79 billion from the Mass Transit Account for fiscal year 2021 for activities under SEC. 103 of Bill H.R. 2. It also provides a long-term vision to address the more than \$100 billion state-of-good-repair backlog in public transit infrastructure and meet the mobility demands of growing communities, including small urban and rural communities. METRO is extremely grateful for the assistance we are receiving from the CARES Act, but it is becoming clear that the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to diminish our revenues and services for many months after those funds are expended.

Because of the CARES Act, METRO will be able to remain stable for the next few months, avoiding (for now) major service reductions and layoffs/furloughs. Unfortunately, the CARES Act provides a short-term bridge and not a fiscal fix. The financial crisis facing METRO has only become clearer as economic models are updated and the impacts of declining sales tax revenues on its operating budget become more critical. Addressing these needs requires increasing funding levels beyond what is already contemplated. I am, therefore, urging you to increase an increase of at least \$24 billion in SEC. 103. FTA of the INVEST in America Act funding to public transit agencies.

We are hopeful that the you will consider the INVEST in America Act this week and increase the authorization from \$5.79 billion to \$24 billion in SEC. 103 of Bill H.R. 2 for transit that is distributed to proportionally to all public transit agencies in the same manner as the CARES Act. Without this funding, METRO may be required to drastically curtail service to those who rely on the services it provides. Furthermore, keeping workers employed through this fund supports economic productivity while also preventing these workers from drawing down on other relief programs intended for those Americans most in need.

Thank you for your strong support of public transit during your time in Congress, and please let us know if we can provide additional information on the impacts of COVID-19 on our operations, as well as any background on how we are spending our CARES Act funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Alex Clifford
CEO/General Manager

cc: The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Chair, Subcommittee on Highways and Transit,
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Rodney Davis, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Highways and Transit,
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Dan Lipinski, Chairman, Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and
Hazardous Materials, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of
Representatives

The Honorable Rick Crawford, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and
Hazardous Materials, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of
Representatives

Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of
Representatives