



June 5, 2025



RE: Support of Public Transit Funding in State Transportation Budget



Dear Chairman Cirino, Vice-Chair Chavez, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:



As the leaders of Ohio's regional economic development organizations and chambers of commerce, we write to express our strong support for Ohio's public transit systems, and the key role transit plays in supporting our workforce and economic development efforts. Specifically, we would ask that you maintain the \$37M in GRF funding for public transit in the budget - the same level as approved in the previous FY24/25 biennial operating budget and as passed by the House version of HB 96.



Rural and urban public transit is essential for workforce development and economic mobility. As Ohio continues to attract historic investment to our state, with previous announcements from Intel, Ford, and Honda, and recent announcements from Amazon Web Services, we must ensure our public transit providers are adequately funded to meet the needs of the workforce. A report by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) notes that 50% of trips on public transit are to and from work. We must be able to connect workers to jobs as employers expanding or relocating to Ohio are depending on employees to be able to get to work.



Public transit is a catalyst for economic development across the state. According to APTA, 87% of trips on transit directly benefit the local economy. Additionally, the 2023 State of Poverty in Ohio report stated that Ohio spends a mere \$6 per capita on public transportation, one-tenth the national average. Further, of Ohio's 88 counties, 25 have no public transit whatsoever. This funding gap disproportionately affects working low-income Ohioans who depend on public transit to get to work, many of which cannot afford to live close to their job. In turn, this lack of funding negatively impacts the bottom line of Ohio businesses who cannot attract and retain dependable workers.



The public transit agencies of today are innovative and forward-thinking with mobility services including on-demand micro-transit, first and last mile solutions, bus rapid transit agencies to draw down millions in potential federal funding. Without an available local match, generational federal funding for Ohio will be left on the table.





We respectfully request that the Senate *maintains* the \$37M of public transit GRF funding as passed by the House and recognize public transit's pivotal role in serving Ohio's growing economy.



Sincerely,

The Business Community of Ohio

