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Senate Transportation Committee
Interested Party Testimony, State Transportation Budget (HB74 – Oelslager)
Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Chair Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee, first and foremost I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Sub. House Bill 74, the state transportation budget for Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023.

My name is Diane Howard, I am the Co-chair of NOBLE, Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality. NOBLE is a coalition of individuals and organizations advocating on behalf of consumers of State Health and Human Services programs. We are low-income citizens who are most impacted by budget decisions and reductions at the State, Local and Federal levels.

I am also a long-time public transportation user and many of my neighbors are also public transit riders. We rely heavily on public transportation to do our shopping, to get to our appointments, and to get to our jobs. Today I speak on behalf of NOBLE, my neighbors and the thousands of people across the state who rely on public transportation for our daily needs.

We are facing a crisis! State support for public transportation is among the lowest in the country. I ask that the State legislature consider adequately funding public transportation now and for the future. Today I ask that **at least \$150 million dollars be invested in public transportation per year**, not including pass through funds. This recommendation comes from a study done by The Ohio department of Public Transportation in 2015. It is important to remember that Ohio is stronger when transportation is affordable and accessible.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Diane Howard