

Public Transit is vital to all of Ohio, but esp. in rural Ohio. Many people who live in rural Ohio do not have access to reliable transportation. They depend on Public Transit to take them to life's basic needs: medical, employment, education, grocery shopping, etc.

People of all walks of life use Public Transit. At any given time, you will find a veteran, a college student, a senior citizen, someone in a wheelchair, a business professional, and even a politician on a Public Transit vehicle. They are going to work, medical appointments, (including mental health and substance abuse). They are going to the grocery store, to visit a friend or their family, they are going to school, church or even one of Ohio's beautiful parks.

Cutting Public Transit funds from \$70M to \$7.5M could eliminate Public Transit in rural Ohio. In rural Ohio, Public Transit doesn't have dedicated funding, there's no tax levy. The Public Transit systems rely on United Way, contracts with Department of Family Services, local schools and donations. Sadly, it seems the people who are making the decisions to cut Public Transit funding, does not understand the quality of life Public Transit provides to Ohioans, esp. in rural Ohio. Not only will the elderly and those with disabilities lose their freedom, they may lose their lives, as they will no longer have transportation to go to their much needed medical appointments.

In Seneca County, Public Transit has partnered with Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery Agencies as most of their clients do not have driving privileges or a vehicle. Also, Public Transit has partnering with Seneca County Council on Homelessness. This agency, is teaching people how to be middle class. Think about that, "teaching people to be middle class". This agency, Public Transit and several factories outside of Tiffin are collaborating to teach job skills, how to save money, and stay drug free. Removing Public Transit from these collaborating efforts, will end all progress and end many hopes of a better life.

Public Transit kept the wheels rolling during the pandemic. Many essential workers used Public Transit to get to work. Public Transit drivers stepped in, when families were not permitted to go with their loved one's doctor appointments. Public Transit assisted the National Guard with their Food Distributions Assignments by delivering food to those that could not get to the distribution site. Many children are fed breakfast and lunch at school. When the schools closed, Public Transit assisted with getting these meals to the children.

It's truly scary when you think about the domino effects of cutting Public Transit funds in Ohio; Lost lives, an increase of drug and alcohol abuse, expecting mothers and babies not receiving the medical care they need, economic fallout from lost jobs, school drop outs, increase in crime, unsafe neighborhoods, children not eating, the list can go on and on.

Public Transit is a life line to so many agencies and people, especially those that have fallen on hard times at no fault of their own.

You have the power to keep this from happening. Please do not cut the \$70M from Public Transit.