

# United States Senate

July 8, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

As you continue negotiations on further actions to respond to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, we write to strongly urge you to include significant financial support for public transit in any final agreement. Safe and healthy buses, subways, and trains are absolutely vital for health care workers, law enforcement, first responder, and other safety personnel working on the front lines of the pandemic, and will be essential to a full economic recovery in the months and years ahead. For those reasons, we must ensure that our transit systems are fully operational going forward by providing an additional \$32 billion in emergency supplemental funding for public transportation through the end of 2021.

Public transit enables our economy. In addition to the 435,000 workers directly employed by transit agencies and the hundreds of thousands of manufacturing, rail supply, construction, maintenance, and design and engineering jobs dependent on the industry, millions of other activities are enabled by transit – either for getting to and from work or by the economic multiplier effects transit creates. Through the depths of the current crisis, public transportation agencies have continued operating to ensure that essential workers and others can do their jobs and get back to their families at the end of each shift. These operations have enabled our economy to stay alive, but they have come with massive increases in costs while revenues have fallen.

In the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), we took decisive action to support our transit systems by providing \$25 billion in immediate support. This funding came at a time when we expected the crisis to be relatively short and accompanied by a steep, immediate recovery. Now, as the public health crisis has necessitated the continuation of stay-at-home orders for months in states across the country, we must recognize the true costs of the coronavirus on our transit systems. Decreased farebox revenue has continued longer than we anticipated two months ago, and the reduction in other revenue sources such as local sales taxes are deeper than anyone predicted. Many transit agencies, particularly those hardest hit by the pandemic, will exhaust their CARES Act funds before the end of the year.

Given these facts, we must act swiftly to preserve public transit options for Americans and keep our systems safe and healthy. This is an unprecedented time in our history and it requires strong, demonstrated leadership from this body, as well. We support an additional \$32 billion in emergency aid to transit systems through the end of 2021 not only to keep these systems operational, but also to signal to our constituents that we will be ready for the economic recovery we are all working towards.

Sincerely,

/s/ Robert Menendez

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Robert Menendez  
United States Senator

/s/ Tammy Baldwin

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Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator

/s/ Kamala D. Harris

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Kamala D. Harris  
United States Senator

/s/ Richard Blumenthal

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Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator

/s/ Sheldon Whitehouse

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Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator

/s/ Dianne Feinstein

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Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

/s/ Edward J. Markey

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Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

/s/ Robert P. Casey, Jr.

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Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator

/s/ Jeffrey A. Merkley

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Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator

/s/ Mazie K. Hirono

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Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator

/s/ Ron Wyden

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Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

/s/ Kirsten Gillibrand

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Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator

/s/ Amy Klobuchar

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Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator

/s/ Chris Van Hollen

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Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

/s/ Mark R. Warner

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Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator

/s/ Richard J. Durbin

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Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin

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Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

/s/ Gary C. Peters

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Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

/s/ Bernard Sanders

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Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator

/s/ Tim Kaine

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Tim Kaine  
United States Senator

/s/ Cory A. Booker

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Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator

/s/ Elizabeth Warren

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Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator

/s/ Sherrod Brown

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Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator

/s/ Tina Smith

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Tina Smith  
United States Senator