

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 19, 2018

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
& Urban Development
Senate Appropriations Committee
184 Dirksen Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
& Urban Development
Senate Appropriations Committee
125 Hart Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Collins and Ranking Member Reed:

As the Subcommittee begins crafting the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we encourage you to support critical investments in public transportation around the country by providing at least \$3.2 billion in funding for the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program. We were disappointed to see a reduction in funding for this vital program in the Administration's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request, contradicting Congress' recent bipartisan commitments to the CIG program in both the FY 2017 and FY 2018 omnibus appropriations bills.

America's population is growing, presenting major transportation challenges for communities across the nation. More people, vehicles, and freight crowding our roads translates to increased costs and delays for commuters and businesses alike. A critical tool for combatting congestion is federal investment in public transportation. And with transit ridership in the United States at its highest level in five decades, federal funding for transit through the CIG program is more important than ever. The CIG program, through its New Starts, Small Starts, and Core Capacity grants, allows communities to compete for funding to build and improve subway, commuter rail, light rail, bus rapid transit, streetcar, and ferry projects that move people more efficiently, improve quality of life, and increase economic growth and sustainability.

The significant benefits of investment in the CIG program to both large cities and growing communities across the country cannot be overstated. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, every \$1 billion of federal investment in public transportation supports approximately 13,000 jobs and an estimated \$3.5 billion in economic activity. Nearly 90 percent of public transportation trips directly benefit the economy, increasing access for tens of millions of riders each day to jobs, education, healthcare, social services, and local businesses. Public transit investments save four billion gallons of gasoline, prevent 37 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions, and save travelers 646 million hours of commute time every year. Federal investment in transit also leads to increased economic development in the areas surrounding transit stations, increasing property values of nearby homes and businesses by as much as 130 percent. These benefits reach far beyond the communities in which the projects are built, with more than 2,700 transit component manufacturing facilities and companies in 49 states employing tens of thousands of workers supporting transit projects.

The Administration's FY 2019 Budget Request ignores the clear regional and national benefits of federal investment in public transit and the obvious support of the Republican controlled

Congress for increased funding for the CIG program. Under the Administration's proposal, cities and states stand to lose billions in funding for projects that are already moving toward construction. In addition, DOT has slowed down progress on projects in the CIG pipeline by adding new, onerous, and unnecessary layers of review in contradiction to the Administration's streamlining goals. As a result, we ask the Subcommittee to include the strongest language possible directing DOT to follow existing law and clear congressional intent by advancing the nearly 60 projects in the CIG program pipeline without unnecessary delays. DOT should continue to move eligible projects into the project development and engineering phases; rate, evaluate, and recommend projects for future funding; and sign Full Funding Grant Agreements and Small Starts Grant Agreements promptly when project sponsors are ready to execute their grant agreements.

Robust CIG funding and clear congressional direction are needed to ensure DOT continues to advance critical transit projects and maintain its commitments to communities across the country. Thank you for your continued support for this program, which helps communities expand and improve public transportation service to increase connectivity, reduce congestion, and boost economic growth.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



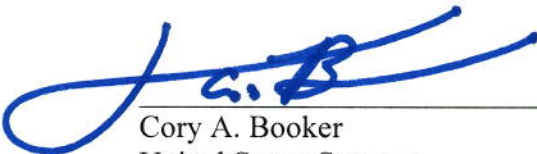
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



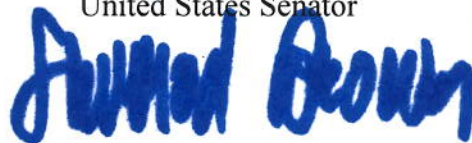
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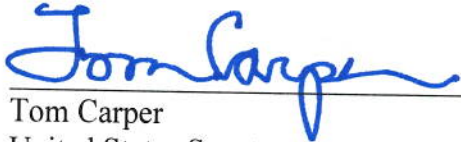
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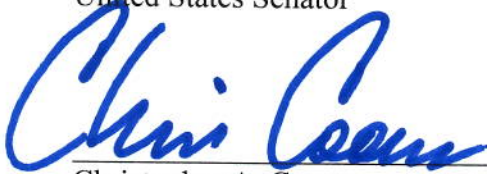
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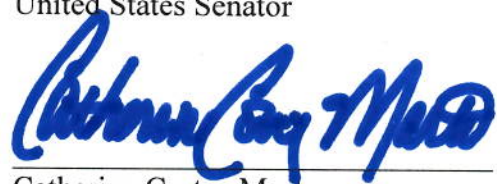
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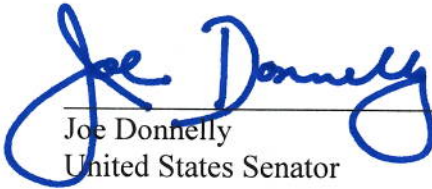
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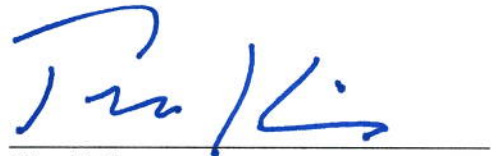
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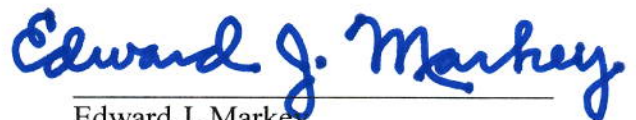
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



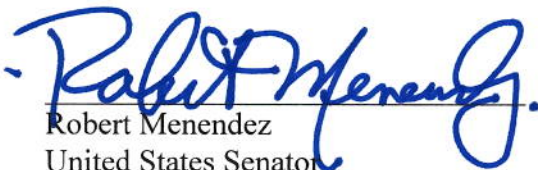
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United States Senator



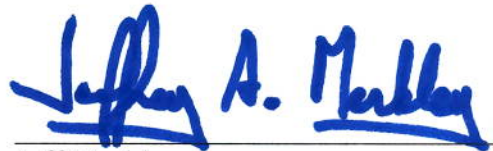
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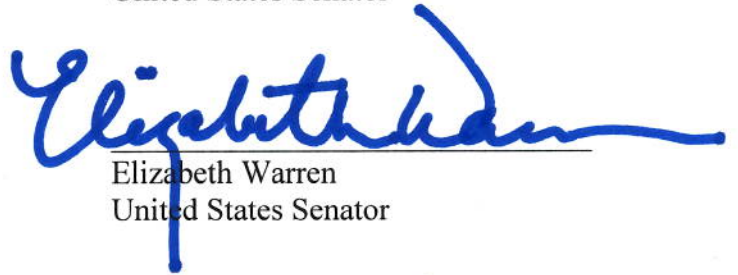
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Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



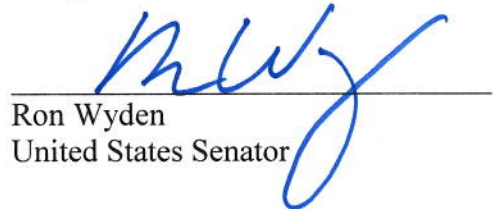
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United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



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United States Senator



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