

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 2, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chair
Committee Transportation &
Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
Chair
Committee on Banking,
Housing, and Urban Affairs
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Transit equity in reconciliation

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Chair DeFazio, and Chair Brown:

On behalf of the people of Georgia, we write to request an allocation of at least \$30 billion for transit in reconciliation.

While the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was an important first step towards making necessary investments in transit, that legislation included \$46 billion less for transit than was proposed in President Biden's American Jobs Plan and a level of funding that is insufficient to meet the mobility needs of our communities and respond to the climate crisis.

Our working-class constituents, especially people of color, are counting on us to make a transformative investment in mobility for low-income Georgians.

Low-income Georgians face a mobility crisis. In Metro Atlanta, for example:

- While gentrification continues to displace historically Black communities, just one in 14 low-income households lives within a half-mile of a high-capacity transit stop;
- While food deserts continue to disproportionately impact Black families, 60% of residents cannot access a grocery or convenience store within 30 minutes by transit; and
- While Black women in Georgia suffer from a maternal mortality rate three times higher than the national average and twice as high as Mexico, 70% of residents cannot access a single healthcare facility within 30 minutes by transit.

Georgia's mobility crisis disproportionately affects people of color in our state. Black Americans are three times less likely to own a car than white Americans and, among urban residents, Latino Americans are twice as likely compared to white Americans to regularly use public transit.¹ In the City of Augusta, Black residents comprise 79% of public transit commuters.²

Rural Georgians likewise urgently require transit solutions. Valdosta, Georgia, is rapidly scaling a microtransit system that deserves Federal support; other smaller localities and rural areas are developing similar efforts.

Not surprisingly, essential workers bear the brunt of Georgia's mobility crisis. For example, two-thirds of metro Atlanta's transit commuters are essential workers.

Robust funding for transit is also vital to addressing the climate crisis. The transportation sector remains the largest contributor to GHG pollution. Already, public transit saves 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline each year in the United States, with immense potential to further reduce fossil fuel emissions.³

Access to mobility is a vital condition of health and opportunity. As the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure prepare their reconciliation measures, we have a historic opportunity to make a transformative investment in mobility for low-income Georgians and people across the country.

On behalf of the people Georgia, we write to request a robust allocation for transit in reconciliation. Providing an investment of at least \$30 billion would position us to meet the needs of our communities.

Sincerely,



Jon Ossoff
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock United States
United States Senator

¹ <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/07/who-relies-on-public-transit-in-the-u-s/>

² <https://www.augustaga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7169/Final-Public-Transit-Survey-Report?bidId=>

³ https://www.kcata.org/about/kcata/entries/environmental_benefits_of_public_transit



Carolyn Bourdeaux
Member of Congress



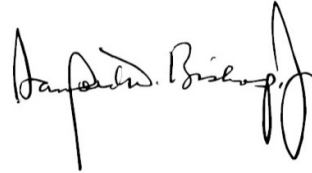
Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress