

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 2, 2021

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

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

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Chair Brown:

As members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, representing an array of states with extensive transit needs, we are writing to ask that the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee allocate at least \$30 billion for transit in the upcoming reconciliation bill.

While the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was an important down payment on our nation's public transportation systems, the legislation included \$46 billion less for transit than President Biden proposed in his American Jobs Plan.

Transit is vital for urban, suburban, and rural communities across our nation. Investments in transit are a matter of equity and racial and economic justice. Black Americans are three times less likely to own a car than white Americans. Among urban residents, Latino Americans are twice as likely compared to white Americans to regularly use public transit.¹

Redlining and other discriminatory federal policies have disproportionately exposed Black and brown communities to environmental harms at unacceptably higher rates than in neighboring communities. Furthermore, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) research on the health effects of particle pollution concluded that nonwhite populations faced higher risk from these pollutants and toxins.² Transportation is a huge source of this pollution, especially combustion engines. Robust investment in electrified transit infrastructure is essential to tackling the climate crisis, and will be an important step forward to address the environmental injustice of past Federal policies.

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

² U.S. EPA, 2019, Section 12.5.4.

To address these challenges, it is also vital to expand mass transit. 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.

Transit investments can increase access to affordable housing. Working class families need access to both affordable housing and affordable transportation in order to thrive. Pairing investments in housing and transit will have transformational benefits for our neediest communities that will improve our economy and address the climate crisis.

For these reasons we strongly urge that the reconciliation measure include \$30 billion allocated for electrified transit across the country.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jon Ossoff
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator