

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 21, 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  
Chairman  
Committee Transportation &  
Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sherrod Brown  
Chairman  
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, Chairman DeFazio, and Chairman Brown:

On behalf of the people of Georgia, we write again as a united Democratic Georgia delegation in the House and Senate to advocate for the inclusion of at least \$10 billion for the Public Transportation Expansion Act in the Build Back Better reconciliation measure.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee included \$10 billion in funding for this program, and it is critical for the people of Georgia that this program is maintained as the final details of reconciliation are being negotiated.

This program would, for the first time, provide funding that explicitly connects affordable housing to the public transportation network. This funding will serve commuters in low-income communities that have been historically neglected, connecting our constituents with medical care, education, and jobs.

Lack of simultaneous access to affordable housing and to mobility deepens inequality of economic opportunity along class and race lines, disconnecting low-income households from jobs and access to basic facilities like health clinics, schools, and grocery stores.

The ongoing challenge posed by rapid gentrification of many American cities and the wide racial disparities in access to transportation makes this policy even more essential. For example: 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 use transit regularly.<sup>1</sup>

We also cannot adequately address climate change without investment in transit. The transportation sector is the most significant contributor of greenhouse gases in the U.S., and transit is an important part of the solution.<sup>2</sup> A single person who changes their 20-mile round-trip commute from a personal vehicle to transit can reduce their annual CO2 emissions by 4,800 pounds per year, equal to a 10% reduction in all greenhouse gases produced by a typical two-adult, two-car household.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, Environmental Protection Agency research found that non-white populations have a higher risk of exposure to particle pollution and a greater likelihood of health problems due to these pollutants and toxins. Over time, redlining and other discriminatory federal policies have disproportionately exposed minority communities to these harmful pollutants.

As Georgia's Democratic delegation, we stand united in support of this program. The connection between a robust transit system and safe, affordable housing is clear, and we cannot miss the opportunity to make this critical investment. Providing an allocation of at least \$10 billion is an essential first step.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jon Ossoff  
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator



Carolyn Bourdeaux  
Member of Congress



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

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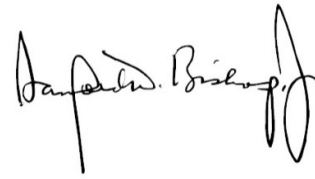
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/07/who-relies-on-public-transit-in-the-u-s/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

<sup>3</sup> "Public Transportation's Contribution to U.S. Greenhouse Gas Reduction," Science Applications International Corporation, September 2007.



Lucy McBath  
Member of Congress



Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress



David Scott  
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress