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June 8, 2010

Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

We urge your leadership in passing S.3412, The Public Transportation Preservation Act of 2010, as introduced by Senators Dodd, Durbin, Schumer, Gillibrand, Lautenberg, Menendez, Reed and Brown (OH). This immediate, temporary infusion of \$2 billion in transit operating funding will preserve service for the millions of Americans who rely on transit every day, as well as save and create thousands of jobs.

In 2008, Americans took more than 10.7 billion trips on transit, the highest level in over five decades. Yet today, as a result of the economic downturn, transit systems around the nation are in crisis—forced to cut jobs, eliminate services, and raise fares, deeply hurting millions of Americans who have already been hit hard by the recession.

A recent survey by the American Public Transportation Association indicates that since January 2009, 84 percent of transit systems raised fares, cut service or are considering one of those actions. These cuts are difficult for lower-income people, working families, older Americans, people with disabilities, African Americans, and Latinos—all of whom are particularly dependent on transit service to get to jobs, take their children to school, and access health care and other essential services. Further, more than half of our nation's transit agencies have laid off workers or are considering layoffs in the future. This is a nationwide crisis that has affected transit systems from Cuyahoga County, Ohio to Washington, DC to Billings, Montana to Chicago, Illinois to Richland, Washington to New Jersey's statewide transit system to more than 30 transit systems in California.

During the past several weeks, thousands of Americans from communities across the country have gathered together to rally for the preservation of our public transportation system -- a vital lifeline for urban, suburban and rural communities alike. These tough economic times call for this emergency legislation, and we thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Respectfully,

Transportation for America
Amalgamated Transit Union
America 2050
American Public Transportation Association

Transportation for America is a broad, and growing coalition of housing, environmental, public health, business, social equity groups and elected leaders that are committed to creating a new national transportation program that will take America into the 21st Century. We may come from different backgrounds and find different ways to get around, but we believe all Americans can work together to invest in modernized infrastructure, provide families and individuals with more and better options and create healthy communities where people can live, work and play.

Apollo Alliance
Institute for Transportation and Development Policy
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
International Downtown Association
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Railroad Passengers
National Center for Bicycling & Walking
National Housing Conference
Partnership for Prevention
PolicyLink
Prevention Institute
Sierra Club
Transport Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO
Transportation Communications International Union/IAM
Transportation Equity Network
Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO
United Transportation Union

cc: Senator Christopher Dodd
Senator Richard Durbin
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Senator Frank Lautenberg
Senator Robert Menendez
Senator Jack Reed
Senator Sherrod Brown