



June 19, 2024

Dear Michigan Leaders,

Michigan cannot afford to make public transit an afterthought.

A robust state investment in public transportation - including strengthening current bus systems, expanding train services to connect more Michigan communities, and enhancing mobility options - would be a win-win-win for Michigan residents, businesses, and the state as a whole.

Public transit is essential to Michigan residents, including:

- **Bus Riders** - tens of thousands of seniors, workers, students, and others who depend on the bus to get where they need to go;
- **Michigan's Elders**, who deserve to age in their own homes while not depending on family for every ride they need;
- **Working Families**, who can save for college or a house if they can get around with one less car;
- **Environmentalists**, who know we can't solve the climate crisis if everyone keeps driving everywhere;
- **Students**, who have far more options for educational success if transit can reliably get them to school; and
- **People with Disabilities**, many of whom are able to work and be fully engaged in our society, just can't drive.

Public transit is also important to Michigan businesses because

- **Employers** need reliable workers who can come to work even if their car won't work and
- **Business investors** want to grow their companies in communities where young professionals choose to be.

Public transit is critical to all of Michigan because

- People riding transit **lessen traffic** on Michigan roads for everyone else;
- **Car crashes** kill over a thousand Michiganders each year and transit is ten times safer.;
- **Young Professionals** are choosing to move to vibrant, walkable communities where driving isn't required;
- We're all one broken foot or broken axle away from needing mobility alternatives; and
- **We all depend on people who depend on transit**, including nurses, cooks, teachers, Rx techs, day care workers, etc.

For those reasons and more, we, the undersigned groups representing hundreds of thousands of people across the state, urge Michigan leaders to make public transportation a priority to make our state a more affordable, sustainable, and attractive place to live, work, invest, and play.

Sincerely,

Transportation Riders United
Megan Owens, Executive Director

AgeWays (aka Area Agency on Aging 1b)
Stephanie Hall, Research & Advocacy Manager

Disability Rights Michigan
Michelle Roberts, Executive Director

Michigan League for Public Policy
Monique Stanton, President & CEO

Sierra Club Michigan
Tim Minotas, Deputy Legislative & Pol. Director

NAACP Greater Grand Rapids Branch
Cle Jackson Jr, President

Disability Advocates for Kent County
Michael Williams, Transportation Organizer

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 26
Schetrone Collier, President & Business Agent

Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition
Evan Zimmermann, President

Groundworks Center, Traverse City
Carolyn Ulstad, Transportation Program
Manager

Natural Resources Defense Council
Derrell Slaughter, Michigan Policy Director,
Climate and Energy

League of Michigan Bicyclists
Matt Penniman, Comms & Advocacy Director

Michigan Environmental Council
Ross Gavin, Policy Director, Urban Land Use,
Water Infrastructure, and Transportation

MI Air MI Health, It's Electric!
Kindra Weid, Coalition Coordinator

Michigan Climate Action Network
Dr. Denise Keele, Executive Director

Detroit Jews for Justice
Allie Zeff, Executive Director

Oakland Forward
Autumn Butler, Co-Executive Director

The Original United Citizens of Southwest
Detroit
Theresa Landrum, President

We the People of Detroit
Monica Lewis-Patrick

Detroit 2030 District
Connie Lilley, Executive Director

MI Association of Railroad Passengers
Steve Vagnozzi, Govt Affairs Coordinator

Ecology Center
Charles Griffith, Climate & Energy Program
Director

Strong Towns Grand Rapids
Laura Cesa, State Policy Coordinator

Programs to Educate All Cyclists (PEAC)
John Waterman, Executive Director

Detroit People's Platform
Renard Monczunski, Transit Organizer

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Amy Hemmeter

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Michigan Clinicians for Climate Action
Elizabeth Del Buono, MD; President and
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Southwest Detroit Community Benefits
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CALSTART
Alissa Burger, Regional Policy Director