

AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION

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Dear Representative:

On behalf of the nearly 200,000 members of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), we would like to commend the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for its bipartisan approach in developing the *Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015* (H.R. 3763). We urge you to vote in favor of moving the bill forward.

The legislation addresses several of our legislative priorities. It enhances transit worker and passenger safety and makes real progress toward fostering transit workforce development, especially for frontline employees. Moreover, unlike the Senate's DRIVE Act, the House bill strikes the right balance between public and private service delivery in transit.

However, we do have **major concerns about the flat funding levels in the bill**, and urge the Ways and Means Committee to raise the necessary revenues to meet increased demand in the public transportation sector. The Federal Transit Administration estimates that the nation's transit systems collectively have a state of good repair backlog that exceeds \$78 billion. In addition, massive cuts in capital bus funding in recent years have created a mobility crisis. Many buses now in service are well past their so-called useful life, and vehicle replacement has become a monumental task. Real safety issues exist, as transit systems struggle to preserve their existing fleets through the use of old parts and creative maintenance departments. While transit is still an incredibly safe industry, it is only a matter of time until serious accidents occur due to the aging of the fleets. Moreover, some systems are beginning to shift their precious state and local operating funds to the capital side, creating an influx of service cuts. While the bill does close the gap, **much more investment is needed to meet the needs of transit-dependent people** who rely on the bus for a safe and affordable ride to work, school, and other destinations.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. For more information, please contact Jeff Rosenberg, ATU Director of Government Affairs, at (202) 537-1645 or jrosenberg@atu.org



Lawrence J. Hanley
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