





ClimatePlan



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CALTRAIN



Institute for Transportation
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PolicyLink



CHOICE
IN AGING

March 1, 2022

Dear Governor Newsom, Chair Ting, Chair Skinner, and Committee Members,

In reviewing the FY 2022-23 State Budget draft, the state's commitment to addressing both the climate crisis and racial and economic injustice is clear, and we applaud many of the proposals already included. However, given the outsized role of transportation in both greenhouse gas emissions and addressing inequity, and the impacts of the pandemic on transit agencies' ability to maintain service and increase transit ridership, **we urge you to include an additional \$2.5 billion of operations-eligible funding for public transportation in the budget.**

Considering the ongoing, inequitable impact from the pandemic as well as increasing wildfires and drought due to climate change, now is the time to direct the state's massive budget surplus toward its most pressing issues—racial and economic inequity and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Investments in public transit do both, and the need is urgent as we work to recover from the pandemic.

Public transit is a lifeline for low income people, people with disabilities, many essential workers, and those without cars or licenses, and the backbone of our state's infrastructure. Transit particularly supports [low income Black and Brown residents](#) who are more likely to ride transit and be transit dependent. Yet, agencies across the state are heading towards “fiscal cliffs,” massive budget shortfalls that could lead to cut service, [more stranded riders](#), and laid-off workers. Transit agencies are relying on [pandemic relief funds](#) to restore service, bring back ridership, and most importantly maintain public confidence in their systems. A one-time budget surplus allocation will give them more time to find alternative, sustainable [operations funding solutions](#) in the face of changing pandemic conditions. **If transit ridership is going to return, there must be frequent and reliable service. An augmentation to an operations-eligible**

fund is the best path forward to give agencies the resources they need to provide the transit service riders rely on.

This budget will be the first since the adoption of the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI), Governor Newsom's initiative to align transportation spending with climate and equity goals. Without continued flexible investment from the state, transit agencies will lose ground in their ability to provide meaningful transit service that reduces vehicle miles traveled, directly in opposition to the intent and desired outcomes of CAPTI. Meeting our statewide climate goals will take your bold leadership: we must halt highway widening projects and make a massive shift in funding toward public and active transportation. CalSTA must also integrate new [guidance](#) from the U.S. Department of Transportation on how to spend funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that sets clear expectations for how to prioritize new investments in a way that makes our communities safer, more accessible, sustainable, and equitable.

Finally, as part of providing \$2.5 billion in operations-eligible funding for public transportation to support frequent and reliable service, we support allocating **\$500 million for free and affordable, integrated fares for youth and transit riders**. In addition, we support further **augmentation of \$1.5 billion to the Active Transportation Program, in addition to the \$500 million proposed in the January Budget**. Providing affordable, reliable public transit and active transportation infrastructure are critical to improving connectivity within the state. Thank you for your consideration and leadership as we mark a new path for California's transportation future.

Sincerely,

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