

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned transportation stakeholders, we greatly appreciate your work to pass the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) (P.L. 116-136) that responds to the immediate need for emergency transportation in our communities. Access to reliable and affordable transportation services must continue across the country to ensure that those on the frontlines of the response, such as first-responders, healthcare workers, and grocery workers are able to do their critical work for our communities.

While the CARES Act provides much needed support to public transit systems and state and local governments, we must also ensure transit agencies and local governments have the flexibility to develop innovative solutions that support first-last mile connectivity to transit, specifically biking and walking infrastructure, during these unprecedented times. For example, many communities are considering temporary changes to city streets to accommodate additional meal delivery services or are closing streets to cars to provide adequate space for people to travel or exercise while following social distancing guidelines. Cities are stepping up to make bikeshare free for essential workers. Even bikeshops are keeping their doors open to support active transportation during the crisis. Indeed, the Department of Homeland Security declared in its [Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce guidance March 28th, 2020 memo](#) that those businesses who “repair and maintain...bicycles” were deemed essential during the COVID-19 crisis. Maintaining these initiatives during the crisis, and taking steps to make these changes a permanent part of cities’ transportation landscape, will require resources.

To make it easier to quickly adapt infrastructure to respond to the COVID-19 crisis, we respectfully submit the following proposals for consideration in any subsequent emergency relief legislation.

Level barriers to local jurisdictions investing in active transportation infrastructure:

- Allow a blanket waiver to state design guidelines (not including ADA requirements) for temporary projects designed to improve transportation during the crisis for people who normally rely on transit for essential trips.

- Grant pedestrian, bicycle, and bus priority projects in the disturbed right-of-way a NEPA categorical exclusion, including the study of existing roadway capacity.
- Expedite the Buy America waiver process for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality projects.

Fund transit and active transportation infrastructure:

- Direct funding through the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, and ensure operating and capital funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects is available through the Transportation Alternatives program at a comparable share of any increase to the larger program. Prioritize funding for projects that convert temporary street and lane closures into permanent bicycle lanes and pedestrian infrastructure to improve resilience for the future.
- Direct funding to transit agencies to develop open-loop fare payment systems that incorporate first/last mile and bicycle sharing programs to create seamless mobility for low- and moderate-income populations and alleviate congestion on existing services.
- Direct funding to transit agencies to subsidize fares for low-income individuals, aimed at addressing transportation gaps of service related to first/last mile transit availability, including through bikesharing and microtransit programs.

Provide Documentation and Guidance:

- Expand funding applicability and guidance from the Department of Transportation to include first/last mile services aimed at expanding transit access through innovative shared modes, such as bikeshare, with a focus on equity and reliable access to transportation.
- Fund the Federal Highway Administration to study and document temporary adaptations made to the crisis to evaluate benefits for permanent installations and curb management, including equity and accessibility implications.

Of course, all of these transportation programs will only achieve their full potential if our cities' foundational public mass transit systems remain robust, accessible and operational. It is essential that Congress pass subsequent funding for transit operations to ensure our nations' transit agencies remain solvent during the COVID-19 crisis. Robust transit, combined with bicycling and walking networks, will work together to provide adequate low-cost transportation options for communities and families through this period of crisis and during recovery.

We are committed to serving our communities during this crisis and to working with you to ensure emergency relief funds improve transportation for people who rely on transit for essential trips.

Sincerely,

League of American Bicyclists

America Walks

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP)
BCycle LLC
Lyft
North American Bikeshare Association
National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)
NUMO
PeopleForBikes
Safe Routes Partnership
Shared-Use Mobility Center
Transport Workers Union of America
Transportation for America

Cc:

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
The Honorable Jack Reed, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
The Honorable John Barrasso, Chair, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
The Honorable Thomas R. Carper, Ranking Member, Senate Environment and Public Works
Committee
The Honorable Nita M. Lowey, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable David E. Price, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio, Chair, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
The Honorable Sam Graves, Ranking Member, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

