



**Dallas Area Rapid Transit**  
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June 26, 2020

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2306 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Johnson:

On behalf of Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), I am writing to congratulate you and the leadership of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for approving and advancing House Resolution (H.R.) 2, the Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation (INVEST) in America Act. The Moving Forward Act is an important step towards ensuring that federal funding for public transportation agencies continues at a very critical time. This bill increases funding and streamlines processes in ways that will allow DART to address the existing and growing mobility needs of North Texas.

We applaud the Committee for approving a bill that will significantly increase federal investment in public transportation, by authorizing \$105 billion over five years. We also welcome the focus that H.R. 2 places on increasing ridership frequency, modernizing bus procurement, and funding. Given the continuing impact of the coronavirus on our transit network and employees, we appreciate the inclusion of an additional \$5.79 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 for COVID-19 response and recovery.

While H.R.2 provides increased financial support, we are very concerned that certain provisions of the bill could adversely affect DART's ability to meet the future needs of our riders. In particular, Section 2203 would significantly hinder our ability to provide rider-focused, Mobility as a Service (MaaS). With a population of 7 million, the Dallas-Fort Worth area is currently the fourth largest metropolitan area in the country – and is growing rapidly. In response to consumer demand, increased population, and changes in the marketplace, DART has been steadily working towards becoming the preeminent MaaS provider in the nation.

DART's MaaS principles, which are especially important as we strive to bring riders back to public transportation, include:

- Providing riders with personalized journey planning and management;
- Hassle-free digital payment and ticketing;
- First/last mile transportation combining public transit, on-demand, and shared mobility services; and
- Optimization of data to expand services.

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We believe that Section 2203 would restrict DART's ability to utilize a taxi service, when needed. This limitation would place at risk the "DART Rides" program, which provides service for senior citizens and persons with certified disabilities. These restrictions would also likely eliminate DART's use of third-party contractors for DART's microtransit service called "GoLink." GoLink provides passengers with a personalized, on-demand, curb-to-curb service in communities underserved by traditional transit services. Additionally, it is likely that these restrictions would apply to DART's use of a third-party contractor to provide customers with paratransit services. DART's paratransit service is an origin to destination, curb-to-curb, public service for people with disabilities who are unable to use DART fixed route buses or trains.

In addition, DART is also concerned that Section 2603 of the bill would prohibit us from using federal funds to deploy an automated vehicle (AV) that duplicates, eliminates, or reduces the frequency of existing public transportation service, even if doing so would be less expensive, more efficient, and sustainable. If the legislation is approved in its current form, it would pose a significant barrier to the implementation of envisioned AV pilot projects being considered throughout the country.

The application of AVs in public transportation holds incredible promise, especially when combined with zero-emission vehicles. The full-scale utilization of AVs in transit, as in private vehicles, is some years away, but developments today will start to bring broad benefits later. DART believes that it is essential that the transportation marketplace encourage innovation rather than hinder our ability to capture those potential benefits.

We appreciate your consideration of our support for H.R. 2, with the modifications discussed above. We look forward to discussing these issues with you and others in the delegation. Please contact me directly at 214-749-2544 or by email at [gthomas@dart.org](mailto:gthomas@dart.org) if you have questions about this information.

Sincerely,

/s/ Gary C. Thomas

Reviewed and approved, but not signed due to  
COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic

Gary C. Thomas  
President/Executive Director

c: DART Board