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GoNCTD.com

July 31, 2020

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

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

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

On behalf of America's commuter railroads, which create and support more than 200,000 public- and private-sector jobs, **we urge you to provide at least \$32 billion in additional funding for public transportation, including commuter railroads, in the pending COVID-19 emergency response legislation.** These funds will help offset the extraordinary direct costs and revenue losses that public transit agencies, including commuter railroads, are experiencing as a result of the pandemic, and help our agencies continue to avoid layoffs of this critical workforce.

We greatly appreciate your leadership in enacting the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) (P.L. 116-136). CARES Act funding provided a critical lifeline to enable our agencies to serve healthcare and other essential workers each and every day.

However, over the past two months, in many states and communities, things have taken a turn for the worse—coronavirus cases are spiking, governors and mayors are renewing stay-at-home orders, and businesses are shutting down. The continued pandemic and second wave of restrictions is having an enormous impact on commuter railroads. Our railroads have faced ridership declines of close to 90 percent with a corresponding loss in farebox revenues, and have also seen steep declines in dedicated sales tax, gas tax, and other state and local tax revenues.

Specific to the North County Transit District (NCTD), located in North San Diego County, California, ridership for COASTER, NCTD's passenger rail service that

extends from the Orange County line to the north and follows the Pacific coastline to downtown San Diego to the south, has declined by approximately 90% to 92% compared to the same period last year. COASTER revenues were down by 88% in April and 87% in May compared to last year.

We urge you to support the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) request of **at least \$32 billion in emergency funding for public transportation** to stabilize our industry, enable us to continue to serve our communities throughout the crisis, and provide a foundation for America's economic recovery from COVID-19. Commuter railroads serve as a critical lifeline for essential workers and others to travel from suburban communities to city centers to work, receive healthcare, and support the economy.

The House of Representatives recognized the urgent need to continue to support and stabilize public transportation by providing significant additional COVID-19 funding for public transportation in both H.R. 6800, The Heroes Act, and H.R. 2, the INVEST in America Act.

As you work together to finalize the pending COVID-19 emergency response legislation, we urge Congress to provide at least \$32 billion in additional funding for public transportation, including commuter railroads. Federal support remains critical to stabilize our industry and allow us to sustain our communities, workforce, and our nation as we recover from the economic fallout of the pandemic.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Matthew O. Tucker  
Executive Director

cc: NCTD Board of Directors