

1 [California Public Transit Funding]

2 **Motion to Request for \$2 Billion From the State Legislature in New Funding to**
3 **Save and Improve Public Transit in the San Francisco Bay Area.**

4 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Youth Commission (SFYC) is committed to
5 representing the interests, perspectives, and needs of youth in San Francisco and
6 ensuring their voices are amplified in public policy decision-making spaces; and

7 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Youth Commission has consistently advocated
8 for improving public transit access, expanding transit reliability, and protecting critical
9 programs that support youth, low-income people, and marginalized communities; and

10 WHEREAS, California’s largest and most productive transit systems continue to
11 face a severe and imminent operating deficit with nearly all agencies; and

12 WHEREAS, The operating deficit can have negative effects for youth accessing
13 public transit in San Francisco by potentially losing access to Free Muni for Youth
14 Program, minimizing the School Tripper Program, and cutting key service lines; and
15 therefore be it

16 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission hereby urges the Board
17 of Supervisors and Mayor to urge the California State Legislature to approve the \$2
18 billion request in new funding to save and improve public transit in the San Francisco
19 Bay Area and California.

20

1 **[California Public Transit Funding]**

2

3 **Supplemental Information:**

4

5 See attached document: [Letter of Support]

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

Youth Commission
City Hall ~ Room 345
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place



(415) 554-6446
(415) 554-6140 FAX

The Honorable Mike McGuire
President Pro Tem
1021 O Street, Ste 8518
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Robert Rivas
Speaker
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Ste 8330

Senator Scott Wiener
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Ste 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Laura Richardson
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Ste #7340
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel
California State Assembly
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249

Assemblymember Steve Bennett
California State Assembly
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249

March 17, 2025

Re: Request for \$2 billion in new funding to save and improve public transit

Dear Speaker Rivas, Pro Tem McGuire, Senator Wiener, Senator Richardson, Assemblymember Gabriel, and Assemblymember Bennett:

Public transit is the backbone of our state's economy, and essential for California to meet its climate and air quality commitments while making our state more affordable. Unfortunately, many transit agencies across the state continue to face dire fiscal challenges, and any cuts and closures will disproportionately impact essential workers, people of color, and working-class families.

Youth in San Francisco and across the Bay Area heavily depend on public transit to get to and from school. Currently, the San Francisco Unified School District and other educational institutions do not provide bus service for all; many students depend solely on public transportation to get to school. If the deficit continues to grow without being addressed, youth in San Francisco risk having their transit program completely removed from the operating budget in the next fiscal year. Additionally, 52% of students attending the San Francisco Unified School



District are low-income and will not be able to afford any new transit fare increases if they were implemented. Public transit for youth is a lifeline. It needs to be protected and ensured.

The San Francisco Youth Commission respectfully and urgently requests \$2 billion in new flexible funding for public transit over two years beginning in fiscal year 2025-2026 to help local transit operators address shortfalls and deliver capital projects while they simultaneously work towards more sustainable revenue sources.

Unfortunately, while many transportation agencies work toward new local funding solutions, they continue to face significant fiscal pressures from the lingering and ongoing effects of the pandemic on local and regional economies, concerns about transit riders' and operators' safety, maintenance costs, modernization projects, replacement, expansion, as well as rising operating and capital costs.

Additionally, local agencies have been unevenly affected because each has a budget composed of a different mix of revenue sources. Some agencies, especially those that were largely self-supporting pre-pandemic, continue to suffer the most, including the San Francisco Muni, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), AC Transit, and Caltrain, among others. Multiple public transit agencies are running out of time, and are likely to hit their fiscal cliffs before 2028.

The largest and most productive operators in the state have the most acute operating shortfalls. Muni, BART, AC Transit, and Caltrain- account for more than 80% of the Bay Area's transit ridership and nearly a third of all ridership in the state. Given the extensive makeup of California's transit ridership, their vulnerability jeopardizes the state's ability to reduce climate pollution and improve equity and affordability.

Despite certain agencies having severe income shortfalls, almost all agencies have significant needs for operating funding. Additional expenses to improve cleanliness and safety, such as enhanced cleanings, fare inspectors, and crisis intervention specialists come from agencies' operating budgets. In the Bay Area, public transit is relied upon for getting to and from work, with more than 800,000 jobs within walking distance of a BART station. Additionally, over 70% of all BART trips start or end in BART.

California has ambitious goals that depend on high-quality public transit across the state. To achieve those goals, public transit will need more funding. Thank you for considering our request

Youth Commission
City Hall ~ Room 345
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place



(415) 554-6446
(415) 554-6140 FAX

and for once again recognizing the critical role of public transit in California, now and in the future. For all these reasons, we urge you to provide \$2 billion in new flexible funding for public transit over 2 years beginning in the fiscal year 2025-2026.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Fong". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jason Fong
Chair, San Francisco Youth Commission 2024/2025