



March 8, 2023

Dear Missouri Senate Appropriations Committee,

We are writing to express our strong **support** for continued and increased investment in public transit in Missouri. Founded in 2018, Missourians for Responsible Transportation serves as an umbrella partnership that brings together communities and grassroots organizations from urban and rural areas to advocate with one voice at the state level for a fiscally responsible, safe, and equitable transportation system. MRT represents 35,000 members across Missouri, and our mission is to be the leader in fostering strong communities by aligning advocacy efforts for streets, roads, and trails that work for all Missourians.

For many Missourians who cannot afford or are unable to drive, public transit is the only way to get around, and without it, they may face significant challenges and limitations in their daily lives. Between people who are either too young, too old, or who may have conditions that prevent them from driving a car, **over a quarter of all Missourians don't drive**<sup>1</sup>. To eliminate funding for public transit that enables these individuals to live mobile and independent lives will hurt many of our neighbors and unnecessarily burden them with how to get around in their communities.

Investing in public transit also has broader economic benefits. It can help to attract and retain businesses, improve access to jobs, and stimulate economic growth. Studies have shown that every dollar invested in public transit generates up to \$4 in economic returns<sup>2</sup>. Missouri transit delivers an essential mobility option and supports jobs and the economic health of communities across the state of Missouri. The 2019 Economic Impact of Transit in Missouri report stated that public transit has had a \$3.67 billion direct and indirect economic impact on the state and supported 29,000 jobs<sup>3</sup>. Missouri collects an estimated \$48.8 million in taxes per year because of the economic activity and job creation triggered by transit operations and riders alone.

Furthermore, investing in public transit can help to reduce congestion on roads and highways, which benefits all Missourians, including drivers<sup>4</sup>. By providing support for this essential mobility option, public transit can reduce the number of cars on the road, which can ease traffic and reduce the time and cost of commuting for everyone.

In conclusion, **we strongly urge the Missouri Senate Appropriations Committee to support continued and additional investments in public transit**. The benefits are clear and far-reaching, and it is critical that we invest in these essential services to ensure that all Missourians have access to the mobility they need to live their lives to the fullest.

Sincerely,

Taylor March - Executive Director, Missourians for Responsible Transportation

1. <https://usafacts.org/data/topics/people-society/transportation/safety/licensed-drivers/>

2. <https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-Economic-Impact-Public-Transit-2020.pdf>

3. <https://mopublictransit.org/app/uploads/2019/10/Transit-Economic-Impact-Report-MO-FINAL-Corrected-min.pdf>

4. <https://t4america.org/portfolio/la-transit-strike/>