



## Support Transit Investments and Job Creation in Transportation Funding Appropriations Bill: Vote Yes on S. 1243

July 22, 2013

Dear Senator:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 national organizations to promote and protect the rights of all persons in the United States, we urge you to support the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2014, S. 1243. The bill provides much needed investments in public transit and funding for our nation's transit systems, passenger rail, roads, and bridges, and creates jobs to boost the economy.

The bipartisan Transportation-Housing bill recognizes the importance of investing in our transit system while helping ensure its safety. The transit investments in the bill support projects that will provide new or expanded public transportation services at a time when demand for transit services is increasing. This is especially important for communities of color, which are more likely to rely on mass transit to get to work and school than Whites and who, in urban areas, comprise 62 percent of all bus riders.<sup>1</sup>

Continued investment in the U.S. Department of Transportation's competitive Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants is also critical. These grants have helped communities move forward with job-creating infrastructure projects including road and bridge improvements; transit upgrades; and freight, port and rail expansions. Many TIGER grants have included provisions to ensure that the projects they finance will benefit low-income workers and other disadvantaged communities.

New dedicated funds in the bill will help repair and rebuild our nation's 66,000-plus structurally deficient bridges. In the past six years we have seen two major bridge collapses and experts estimate that 1 in 9 bridges may pose a danger without near-term attention. Awarded through competitive grants, these funds will help keep all individuals safe as they navigate our nation's roads and bridges.

The Leadership Conference believes that all communities need affordable and accessible transportation systems to safely and efficiently access opportunity and grow their local economies. Please vote yes on S. 1243. If you have any questions, please contact senior counsel, Lexer Quamie at (202) 466-3648 or email [quamie@civilrights.org](mailto:quamie@civilrights.org). Thanks for your attention to this important issue.

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Sincerely,



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<sup>i</sup> Pucher, J., & Renne, J. L. Socioeconomics of Urban Travel: Evidence from the 2001 NHTS. *Transportation Quarterly* 57(3) (2003).