

February 2, 2026

Office of Governor Mike Kehoe
PO Box 720
Jefferson City, MO 65102



Dear Governor Kehoe:

While we know the administration is grappling with budgetary issues, the recently proposed SFY27 budget recommendations include a catastrophic loss for Missouri transit. After a 42 percent reduction last year, the current proposal to cut an additional \$5 million from general revenue leaves just \$1.7 million to be split among 30 transit providers statewide for operating assistance. This would deliver a significant blow to transit access and economic opportunities across the state. Per capita spending has already dropped from \$1.89 to \$1.08 in the last year—among the lowest in the nation— and would drop to 27 cents under this proposal.

This will create a dire situation. Public transit providers deliver nearly 40 million rides each year across rural and urban Missouri, while also stimulating \$4 billion in economic activity statewide. This proposed cut will carry very real and tangible repercussions. For countless Missourians, public transit is the only reliable way to reach destinations. Service cuts and cessation will disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, including seniors, individuals with disabilities and those living in rural and underserved areas. It means losing access to jobs, dialysis appointments, essential healthcare services, necessary medications and groceries.

If this budget is adopted, state transit funding will have been cut by 85% since 2024, even as demand for transit accessibility continues to grow among all age groups. Operational costs for transit providers continue to escalate and without adequate state funding, transit agencies will be unable to provide the local match required to secure federal funds for both operations and capital improvements.

The impact will also be felt by employers across Missouri. Over half of the state's transit rides are work commutes. OATS Transit—the largest rural transit provider, serving 87 rural counties in this state—reports employment as its leading trip purpose and the demand is growing.

Now is not the time to cut additional funds from a critical element of Missouri's Transportation system, particularly considering the newly discovered surplus of \$265 million. It is time to invest in it. Without action, Missourians will be left behind. Mobility matters. The time to act is now. Please take action to restore the \$5 million General Revenue reduction from core for Missouri's transit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberly Cella".

Kimberly Cella
CEO of Citizens for Modern Transit and Executive Director of the Missouri Public Transit Association

Co-Signers:

- AARP Missouri
- ATU Local 788
- BikeWalkKC
- BJC Health
- Callaway County Extended Employment
- Camden County Developmental Disability Resources
- Cape Girardeau County Transit Authority
- Citizens for Modern Transit
- City of Houston
- City Utilities of Springfield
- Community Opportunities, Lincoln County DD Board
- Dunklin County Transit Service, Inc.
- Easterseals Midwest
- Employment Connection
- Sam Fiorello, President and CEO, Cortex
- Greater St. Louis Inc.
- HNTB St. Louis
- Kansas City Area Transportation Authority
- Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance
- Kansas City Streetcar Authority
- Local Motion
- Metro Transit St. Louis
- Missouri AFL-CIO
- Missouri and Kansas Laborers' District Council
- Missouri Association of County Developmental Disabilities Services
- Missouri Public Transit Association
- Missourians for Responsible Transportation
- Missourians for Transportation Investment (MFTI)
- OATS TRANSIT
- Jeanette Mott Oxford
- Ray County Transportation, Inc.
- SMTS, Inc.
- St. Louis REALTORS®





Missourians for
Transportation
Investment



House Subcommittee on Appropriations: Public Safety, Corrections, Transportation, Revenue
Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure, and Public Safety
Senate Committee on Appropriations Senator O'Laughlin,
Senator Luetkemeyer
Senator Beck
Representative Patterson
Representative Riley
Representative Aune