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Asm. Laura Friedman
1021 O Street, Suite 5740
P.O. Box 942849-0044, Sacramento, CA 94249

Re: AB 761 - Transit Transformation Task Force – Support

Dear Assemblymember Friedman,

[Name of Your Organization] is proud to support AB 761, the Transit Transformation Task Force. The bill's proposed task force to study policy and funding reforms that can lead to a higher performing, higher ridership transit system is critical to California's ability to meet ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Transit use in California, and in the San Francisco Bay Area, has been in steady decline over the past several decades, despite substantial investments, especially in capital infrastructure. Transit funding sources and existing laws have led to an extremely fragmented and inefficient landscape of transportation agencies and services, which make coordination extremely difficult. Transit in California has never been governed or planned as a statewide system, let alone as a collection of regional systems, but as entirely independent stand-alone systems. The state has also lacked sufficient sources of operations funding to provide high enough service that can lead to increased ridership.

The result of extremely fragmented governance and funding across California has contributed to significant barriers to riders who depend on transit, and to potential riders who would consider using transit, but who instead have no choice but use private vehicles to get around. Uncoordinated schedules and service, different fare structures and payment types, and isolated project planning and delivery leads to an inconvenient network for riders that is difficult to navigate or understand. Our current fragmented governance of transit provides little public accountability for our lack of regional or statewide transit connectivity; high operating costs, paid for by riders, and duplication of many overhead functions that could be shared; and poorly managed transit expansion projects where severe delays and cost overruns are the norm.

It doesn't have to be this way. A 2021 Mineta Transportation Institute study, [Characteristics of Effective Metropolitan Areawide Public Transit: A Comparison of European, Canadian, and Australian Case Studies](#), found that regions with high transit use have common characteristics that are replicable in California, including: integrated fares; regional coordination authorities; consolidated rail agencies; centers of excellence in project delivery; and increased levels of service funded by reliable state or national funding sources.

The proposed Transit and Intercity Rail Recovery Task Force in AB 761 is therefore critically important to both the survival of transit in California, and to our state's goals of expanded

socio-economic accessibility and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. By holistically studying policy and funding reforms, this bill can lead to future legislation that can make transit far more efficient, reliable, and abundant, providing a competitive alternative to driving for millions more Californians. Regions across the world have gone through similar multi-stakeholder processes to bring about governance and funding reforms that have led to steadily increasing transit use. The proposed approach in AB 761 also reinforces efforts within the San Francisco Bay Area to bring about a more coordinated and effective transit system, including our region's recently adopted Transformation Action Plan, which commits to integrated fares and service, and which identifies lack of network management resources and authority as a major barrier to increasing transit use.

In summary, we commend your leadership in introducing AB 761 and wholeheartedly support the bill.

Sincerely,

Your Name and Title