



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **TRANSFORMATIVE TRANSIT BILL INTRODUCED WITH RIDER, WORKER AND COMMUNITY PRIORITIES**

**Advocates call for increased transit service, climate and equity investments**

San Francisco—Today Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) and Senator Aisha Wahab (D-Hayward) introduced the “Connect Bay Area Act,” SB 1031, to provide sustainable operating funding for Bay Area public transit through a regional ballot measure slated for the 2026 election. [The Voices for Public Transportation Coalition](#)—a broad group of 40 community, rider, labor, and policy organizations—celebrated this critical step towards protecting and expanding transit service to meet communities’ needs and climate goals.

“The introduction of SB 1031 is an important milestone, in over five years of work, to operate the transit service the Bay Area needs. The regional measure is our opportunity to ensure we can run frequent, reliable, and affordable buses, trains, and ferries. We will work with the legislature to ensure the measure is funded progressively, so that it doesn’t burden the working class and poor residents that it is meant to benefit,” said Richard Marcantonio, Managing Attorney for Public Advocates.

“SB 1031 is the result of five years of dedicated advocacy from the Voices for Public Transportation Coalition, and we are excited to be taking the next step towards a funding measure that prioritizes transit riders and funds the abundant and accessible network that riders deserve. We look forward to working with lawmakers to ensure that this legislation is as strong as possible in supporting equity and climate,” said Dylan Fabris, Community & Policy Manager at San Francisco Transit Riders.

“It’s high time to adequately invest in the frequent, reliable and affordable service needed by those who most rely on public transit—youth, seniors, essential workers and people with disabilities. For decades, the Bay Area, California as a whole and the nation, have failed to adequately invest in the transit operations,” said Bob Allen, Director of Advocacy and Policy Campaigns, Urban Habitat. “We now have the opportunity to do just that by creating a regional funding measure that is significant enough to advance economic, racial, and social justice and that also helps meet our climate goals.”

Increasing transit service levels will require \$2 billion in annual funding, with at least 70 percent initially going to transit operations, to backfill temporary state and federal funds, and provide service above and beyond current levels. In addition to more service, this measure will fund projects to speed up transit, improve wayfinding, free transfers and multi-agency passes, and access improvements for seniors and people with disabilities.

“Transforming Bay Area transit into a convenient, affordable, integrated system that attracts more riders and reduces driving will require both additional transit operations funding and reforms that make transit coordination mandatory. We applaud Sen. Wiener for his leadership in advocating for public transit, and his introduction of SB 1031 - the first step toward a transformational ballot measure that includes both reforms and new funding,” said Ian Griffiths, Policy Director at Seamless Bay Area. “We look forward to working with legislators, advocates, and transit agencies to advance this critical legislation that will set the stage for a successful ballot measure.”

“We are happy to see SB 1031 focuses on transit operations and safer streets in the Bay Area,” said Zack Deutsch-Gross, Policy Director at TransForm. “However, allowing highway expansion in the measure puts climate, equity and economic prosperity at risk. Every dollar we spend on new highways is one less dollar for public transit and safer streets.”

The authorizing legislation is a critical step toward achieving our vision of transformative transit service in the Bay Area. We are heartened to see two progressive revenue sources, a payroll and per-square foot parcel tax, authorized in the legislation, and the intent to prioritize transit operations with a minimum funding amount. We look forward to working with the legislature to guarantee sufficient funding for transit, progressive revenue sources, and to limit roadway expenditures to state of good repair and safe and complete streets.

“The Bay Area needs a well-connected network with frequent, rapid, backbone services with convenient first-last mile and local service to provide compelling alternatives to driving, in order to meet our climate, housing and equity goals,” said Adina Levin, Executive Director, Friends of Caltrain. “We are looking forward to engaging with the legislation to ensure that this important bill achieves these goals.”

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*[Public Advocates Inc.](#) is a nonprofit law firm and advocacy organization that challenges the systemic causes of poverty and racial discrimination by strengthening community voices in public policy and achieving tangible legal victories advancing education, housing, transportation equity, and climate justice.*

*[Transform](#) works to ensure that people of all incomes thrive in a world safe from climate chaos. We envision vibrant neighborhoods, transformed by excellent, sustainable mobility options and affordable housing, where those historically impacted by racist disinvestment now have power and voice.*

*[San Francisco Transit Riders](#) is the city’s member-supported, grassroots advocate for excellent, affordable, and growing public transit. We believe that empowering everyday transit riders to speak up for rider-first policies will bring us the world-class transit system we need for a livable, sustainable, and accessible San Francisco.*

*[Urban Habitat](#) is a movement support organization working to democratize power and advance equitable policies to create a just and connected Bay Area for low-income communities of color.*