

# *The Alliance for* **TRANSIT OPERATING ASSISTANCE**

## **Why You Need to Join the Alliance and Sign the Charter**

It's a valid question — Why should I join the Alliance for Transit Operating Assistance and sign the Charter? Perhaps your system operates in a rural region or a city under 200,000 in population. Or perhaps you don't represent a transit system. Regardless, there are many critical reasons to join in this effort and to sign our Charter today.

- **It's all about the passengers!** Without the important changes in transit operating assistance legislation around which the Alliance was founded, fewer Americans will have the option of taking public transit to work, to the doctor, to training, to social service programs and to all of the other destinations that make up our daily lives. Make no mistake, the service reductions and fare increases that are being forced upon the transit industry today disproportionately punish low-income workers, older Americans and people with disabilities.

- **Local transit decision-making and flexibility is a vital component in ensuring vibrant transit services.** It makes no common sense that a transit manager in a community of 199,999 population is capable of making the best decisions at the local level on how to spend federal transit investment, while a transit leader in a community of 200,001 cannot. Empowering local transit leadership with the flexibility to maintain services in the current economic climate is a simple way to protect valuable transit services without having to increase federal transit spending.

- **Capital investment in transit — though important — makes no sense when so many transit agencies are scaling back service.** The full impact of the Economic Stimulus and potential jobs bill investment cannot be reached if the transit vehicles and construction projects they promote aren't used by transit riders due to insufficient operating investment. The jobs of transit system personnel like drivers, dispatchers and mechanics are just as important as the construction jobs the stimulus efforts create. Balance is what's necessary and that can only be found by allowing for local decision-making on how federal transit investment is allocated.

- **The surface transportation connectivity and intermodalism that are central to the nation's economic and transportation future cannot be developed if the urban transit network is evaporating due to deteriorating local and state economic conditions.** To realize the full impact of the more than \$8 billion in high-speed and intercity rail projects that the Administration recently committed, transit must be available to provide the link between the station and the final destination. Similarly, urban transit operations are playing an increasingly significant role at the nation's airports, delivering passengers and connecting them with work and home. There is widespread agreement that our national transportation future is an intermodal one — diminished local transit services makes this goal unreachable.

*If you have any questions, please contact the Community Transportation Association of America's Scott Bogren at [bogren@ctaa.org](mailto:bogren@ctaa.org) or the Amalgamated Transit Union's Jeff Rosenberg at [jrosenberg@atu.org](mailto:jrosenberg@atu.org).*