



**CALIFORNIA  
TRANSIT  
ASSOCIATION**

1415 L Street, Suite 200 • Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone (916) 446-4656 • FAX (916) 446-4318

E-Mail: [info@caltransit.org](mailto:info@caltransit.org)

[www.caltransit.org](http://www.caltransit.org)

January 20, 2010

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg  
Senate President pro Tempore

The Honorable Karen Bass  
Speaker of the Assembly

The Honorable Dennis Hollingsworth  
Senate Republican Leader

The Honorable Martin Garrick  
Assembly Republican Leader

**RE: 2009-10/2010-11 State Budget – Public Transit Supports Jobs & Clean Air**

Legislative Leaders:

On behalf of the California Transit Association and its members, and for the Californians who took more than 1.5 billion passenger trips on public transit systems last year, I urge you to **OPPOSE the Governor's 2010-11 State Budget proposal on transportation**, which eliminates the core sources of historic state funding for public transportation. The sales tax on gasoline (Proposition 42), sales tax on diesel, sales tax on nine cents of the excise gas tax (Proposition 111), and spillover, which combined would otherwise generate \$1.586 billion in FY 2010-11, have traditionally supported – though the Public Transportation Account (PTA) – transit operations, capital expenditures, and rolling stock and other equipment purchases for state, regional and local transit systems. **The governor's proposal completely abandons state support for regional and local transit systems and their riders**, and spends down the remaining balance of PTA funds on only *state* transit priorities and the General Fund's historic obligation to pay transit bond debt service.

Not only does this proposal eliminate all sources of public transit funding, **it also completely eliminates all Proposition 42 revenue**, traditionally spent on highway and transit capital projects, and local city streets and county road projects. While the governor would have you raise the gas tax to make up for the loss in highway and streets / roads spending, he would also have you spend a significant portion of that new revenue on the General Fund's historic obligation to pay highway and transportation bond debt service.

While we acknowledge you're grappling with a massive General Fund deficit, this proposal provides little meaningful spending relief for motorists at the gas pump, and moreover it strands citizens who need better alternatives to the automobile now more than ever, like families taking the bus to work, commuters on rail lines, disabled and seniors accessing healthcare and social services, and kids taking transit to school. Having fewer transit options means not only reduced mobility for our citizens, but it means increased greenhouse gas emissions from the sector contributing nearly 40% of our state's global warming problem.

Even worse, this proposal will lead transit agencies and their private sector suppliers to eliminate good-paying jobs, further slowing down California's economic recovery.

Because the last three state budgets have diverted over \$3.4 billion in state spending on local transit systems, our agencies have implemented multiple fare increases, service cuts, and capital deferrals, and they laid off bus and train operators, maintenance and administrative staff, and other personnel. Continued service cuts of up to 35 percent per agency are anticipated due to these raids on transit funding – and it will get worse if you permanently eliminate all transit funding from the state – meaning thousands of California jobs are still at stake. These proposed cuts would pose an immediate threat to nearly 2,000 jobs in the San Francisco Bay Area alone. With the state’s unemployment rate hovering near 12 percent, job retention – if not creation – should be a priority to help in our economic recovery.

In addition, with billions of dollars worth of capital improvement projects put on hold or cancelled altogether due to loss of funding, the opportunity for significant, vital economic stimulus would be squandered. If invested in transit capital and infrastructure projects, the nearly \$1.6 billion proposed to be cut this year could have generated over 28,000 jobs.

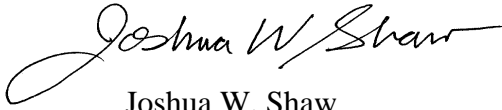
These cuts also ignore the fact that spending on transportation infrastructure grows the economy: Every \$1 invested in public transportation projects and services generates approximately \$6 in local economic activity. Furthermore, the elimination of funding for public transportation will place a greater burden on our crumbling state highway system, which we cannot afford to maintain, let alone expand, as demonstrated by the lack of funding available for the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) funding. The Governor’s proposal exacerbates the problem by creating a stagnant revenue stream that reduces the buying power and requisite resources necessary to help reduce traffic congestion, improve mobility, and ignores his stated goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Public transit should be playing a much larger role in helping the state meet its clean air goals: Better and more frequent transit service attracts more people from their cars, thus reducing vehicle miles traveled and leading to concurrent reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Use of public transportation produces 95 percent less carbon monoxide and about half as much carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxides per passenger mile, compared to private vehicles. Transit use in California also reduces carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 3.6 million metric tons annually. Clearly, regional and local governments will never meet their GHG emission reduction targets under AB 32 (the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006) and SB 375 (Steinberg) if you further cut or even eliminate State funding for public transit.

Thus, we urge you again to reject the Governor's proposal to eliminate state funding for public transportation.

We look forward to working with you. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joshua W. Shaw". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Joshua W. Shaw  
Executive Director

cc: Members of the California State Senate  
Members of the California State Assembly