

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

February 7, 2022

The Honorable Nuria Fernandez
Federal Transit Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Administrator Fernandez:

We are writing in support of the Chicago Transit Authority's (CTA) application for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 funding through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) American Rescue Plan Additional Assistance Program. CTA operates the nation's second largest public transportation system and provides 81 percent of the public transit trips in the six-county Chicago metropolitan area. The award of additional relief funds for CTA's future service needs is vital to Chicago and the region's continued efforts to recover amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, CTA recognized the need to continue providing safe, clean, and robust service to keep Chicago moving. CTA quickly put a variety of measures in place to provide the healthiest environment possible for customers and employees, and in turn, it was the only major U.S. transit agency that did not reduce scheduled service throughout the pandemic. CTA's mission was to provide an essential service to those who needed it the most: health care workers, emergency responders, grocery and manufacturing workers, as well as those needing to make essential trips to the doctor, grocery store, and pharmacy.

CTA continues to provide this essential service, however, the pandemic continues to place a significant strain on farebox revenue. Compared to 2018, revenues for both FY2020 and year-to-date FY2021 are 60 percent lower. The pandemic has shifted when and how people utilize public transit, creating significant uncertainty and the need to incorporate creative solutions to attract riders—including investing in fare promotions, additional safety, and security measures to ensure all Chicagoans have equitable access to public transit. Given that ridership is not expected to return to pre-COVID-19 levels until at least 2025, additional funding from the American Rescue Plan will be critical to its operations.

The riders that CTA serves, and the front-line workers that provide that service, deserve the certainty that grant funding from this program can provide. As such, we ask that you give full and fair consideration to CTA's application.

If you require additional information, please contact Joe Bushong in Senator Durbin's office at (202) 224-7017.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



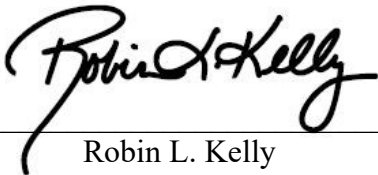
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Marie Newman
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress