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December 19, 2022

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Governor of Ohio
77 South High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: Support of Public Transit Funding in State Transportation Budget

Dear Governor DeWine:

As the leaders of Ohio's regional economic development organizations, we write to express our strong support for Ohio's public transit systems and the key role transit plays in supporting our workforce and economic development efforts. Specifically, we would ask that you maintain \$70 million in GRF funding for public transit in the State Transportation Budget -- the same level as approved in the previous FY22-23 biennial operating budget. We also ask that you consider additional funding for workforce mobility and regional connection efforts to align with Administration priorities and recently announced job centers.

As the pandemic has shown, rural and urban public transit is essential for workforce development and economic mobility. As Ohio continues to attract historic investment to our state, with announcements like Intel, Ford, and Honda, we must ensure our public transit providers are adequately funded to meet the needs of the workforce. We must be able to connect workers not only to jobs, but all Ohioans to food, education, healthcare, and recreation.

Public transit is a catalyst for economic development. A report by the American Public Transportation Association notes that 50% of trips on public transit are to and from work. A recent study by Fund for Our Economic Future called "Where are the Workers", found that 27% of unemployed individuals surveyed consider a lack of transportation an important barrier to finding and keeping a job. This lack of options impacts the bottom line of businesses when they cannot attract and retain dependable workers.

Additionally, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce's recently published "Blueprint for Ohio's Economic Future" specifically calls for investment in public transit and related infrastructure. We agree with this report's

findings of the need for enhanced public transit systems in order to serve Ohio's growing and increasingly regional workforce.

The public transit agencies of today are innovative and forward-thinking with mobility services including, on-demand micro-transit, first and last mile solutions, bus rapid transit and regional connections. In order to continue this innovation, state funding is essential to allow agencies to draw down millions in potential federal funding. Without an available local match, generational federal funding for Ohio may be left on the table.

We respectfully request that the FY24-25 Executive budget proposal recognize public transit's pivotal role in serving Ohio's growing economy and maintain this critical funding.

Sincerely,



Pat Tiberi
President and CEO
Ohio Business Roundtable



Rick Carfagna
Senior Vice President
Ohio Chamber of Commerce



Jill Meyer
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