



June 28, 2021

The House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure  
The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio  
Chairman  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6256

Dear Chairman DeFazio:

On behalf of VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority (VIA), we want to voice our strong support for the INVEST in America Act that will be considered on the House floor this week. VIA is the public transportation agency providing multi-modal service to over 1,213 square miles throughout the Bexar County region, servicing 14 cities, including the City of San Antonio.

Since 2016, VIA has been advancing the development of rapid transit corridor projects, which would feature dedicated lanes for transit to provide the frequency and reliability needed to handle growth today and into the future.

The INVEST Act will help address our mobility needs by making significant investments in surface transportation infrastructure, including \$109 billion for public transportation overall and over \$11 billion for bus and bus facility infrastructure.

Importantly, the bill also restores the share of bus capital funding to 20 percent within two years. This has been a long sought-after restoration for public transit agencies, like ours.

The INVEST in America Act also represents a much-needed federal commitment to building infrastructure that increases mobility and access, makes a real and lasting contribution to improving the environment and connects communities in a more efficient and equitable fashion. It will give the San Antonio and Bexar County region the opportunity to compete for the level of funding necessary to implement rapid transit corridor projects in our region.

There are many features of this legislation that VIA supports. First among those are the recognition that truly transformational infrastructure projects require substantially higher levels of funding that have been provided in the past.

In particular, the legislation's changes to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program will provide VIA the opportunity to participate with an equitable percentage of federal cost share.

INVEST increases the federal cost cap for CIG Small Starts projects to \$320 million and increases the total cost cap to \$400 million, providing more small projects a streamlined approval process at a reasonable federal share.

Additionally, VIA appreciates the provision that replaces the requirement on FTA to minimize Federal cost share with an option for a transit agency to choose a CIG cost share under 60 percent if circumstances and local funding allows.

We truly appreciate the time, effort, and thought you and your Committee have put into the INVEST in America Act and we wish you every success as the bill is considered on the floor.

Sincerely,



Fernando C. Reyes  
Chair, Board of Trustees



Jeffrey C. Arndt  
President and CEO