

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1502

April 22, 2021

Dear Chair DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves:

I am requesting funding for Iowa Public Transit Vehicle Replacement in surface transportation reauthorization legislation.

The project sponsor for this project is the Iowa Department of Transportation and the project is located district-wide.

The funding is designated for replacing Iowa buses and facilities that are beyond their useful life in Iowa's Second Congressional district. The Iowa Department of Transportation expects funds to be distributed to these transit authorities:

Clinton Municipal Transit
Southeast Iowa Bus
Coralville Transit
University of Iowa CAMBUS
CorridorRides
River Bend Transit
Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Authority

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars and is anticipated to have the following benefits:

According to the transit agencies, this request would replace the 53% of Iowa's fleet and aging facilities that are beyond their useful life. This bill is of critical importance for maintaining Iowa's bus transit system. The funds in this bill would go towards bus replacement, maintenance, and storage facilities.

Iowa has several uncommon characteristics that create a challenge in providing public transit to its residents. First, Iowa has a large senior citizen population compared to other states in the nation, which creates a need for more public transit availability and larger bus fleets.

Additionally, Iowa's bus fleet is challenged by harsh winter weather, which corrodes many components on the bus and creates safety concerns with buses that are operated beyond their useful life. Specifically, salt and brine used on the roads deteriorates the structure of buses--eventually, after so many years of use, components simply wear out due to the added stress Iowa's environment places upon them.

Lack of proper storage further accelerates the degradation of Iowa's bus fleet due to environment and use – 88% of transit agencies report needing additional vehicle storage capacity.

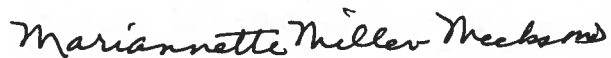
Finally, the ongoing pandemic has strained Iowa's public bus transit by significantly increasing costs with additional PPE and maintenance requirements to meet safety standards.

Currently, 53% of Iowa's bus fleet is beyond its useful life, and \$138 million is needed for replacement vehicles. Without new buses, the viability of each transit system will be deteriorated along with options for travelers.

A quality transit service provided with reliable buses is essential in providing transportation for employment, education, medical, and other quality of life services. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has put a significant strain on Iowa's bus transit agencies. Thus, increased bus capital remains critical to ensure public transit systems are kept in a state of good repair and can do their part to support our nation's economic recovery.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family have any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mariannette Miller-Meeks".

Mariannette Miller-Meeks
Member of Congress