

Running on Fumes

PROTECT STATE TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR VITAL TRANSIT SERVICES



Preserve the State Transit Assistance (STA) fund to maintain lifeline transit service for Californians hit hardest by the recession, protect jobs and help California meet air quality mandates.



Meeting our mobility, economic and environmental goals

The State Transit Assistance (STA) program is a main funding source for local transit operations and capital costs associated with running mass transportation programs, including bus and rail services. Over the past two years, transit systems across California have already increased fares, drastically cut service and laid off employees to stay afloat. Elimination or suspension of the STA program will leave Californians who were hit hardest by the economic recession stranded without lifeline transit service, slow California's economic recovery and undermine our climate change policy.

In addition to those who rely on public transit as their primary means of transportation, new middle class riders have turned to bus and rail services to commute to work. While STA complements local sources of operating funds, transit organizations cannot meet growing public transportation needs without the STA program. Continuing to raise fare prices to make up for budget shortfalls is not sustainable, especially with the service reductions agencies have been forced to implement.

Depletion of state transit operating funds will require further service cuts and the loss of good paying operator and maintenance jobs.

Due to the state budget crisis, since 2008, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) has been forced to cut 22 percent of its transit service, approximately 400,000 vehicle operating hours, and has laid off 362 employees. If the STA program is eliminated, OCTA will have to cut another 13 percent of service.

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) has already been negatively impacted and forced to cut transit service and layoff staff, but further cuts may be necessary without STA funding.

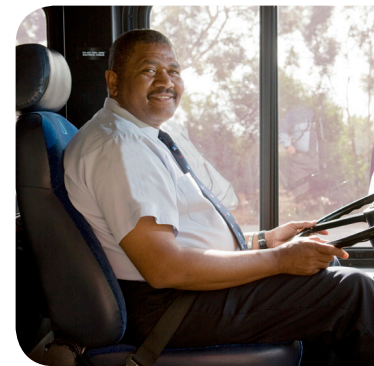
Aside from layoffs and service reductions, elimination of the STA program would have negative impacts on California's economy. According to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), for every \$1 invested in transit, there is a \$6 return on investment generated by local economic activity from retail and housing development near transit.

Reducing public transportation options will increase California's green house gas emissions. Last year, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) set aggressive air pollution reduction mandates throughout the state. Local agencies cannot meet these required mandates without public transportation.

Reject suggestions by Legislative Analyst's Office to eliminate transit funds

A recent report by the Legislative Analyst's Office suggests two ways to obtain additional general fund relief — by suspending a portion of the STA program related to the gas tax swap's new sales tax on diesel fuel, or, by eliminating the sales tax on diesel fuel entirely (zeroing out the STA program) and backfilling the general fund and intercity rail with increased truck weight fees.

Mobility 21 strongly opposes these suggestions, as counter to the will of the people in passing Proposition 22 to protect raids on transportation funds, and detrimental to the long-term viability of local transit service.



County	Percent of transit budget funded by STA
Imperial	7%
Los Angeles*	10%
Orange	7.8%
Riverside	7.6%
San Bernardino	15%
San Diego**	7%
Ventura	17%

* Metro has used federal capital funds to backfill loss of state funds

** Average estimated amount for North County Transit District (NCTD) and San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (SDMTS) prior to FY 10



MORE INFORMATION

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