

February 2, 2012

Congressman Dave Camp  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
1102 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Congressman Sander M. Levin  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Ways and Means  
1139E Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

*Re: Surface Transportation Finance and the Highway Trust Fund*

Dear Chairman Camp and Ranking Member Levin:

For the past thirty years, Congress has provided dedicated funding for highway and transit programs through an excise tax on gasoline dedicated to the Highway Trust Fund. This funding structure has successfully provided highway and transit programs with secure, dedicated revenues and budgetary firewalls dating back to the Reagan administration. The success of this approach is without question: The Trust Fund has been critical to our nation's ability to build an efficient and multimodal transportation system. With record transit ridership, now is not the time to eliminate guaranteed funding for our nation's public transportation systems, which saved Americans close to \$19 billion in congestion costs in 2009. For the first time in thirty years, the pending legislation H.R. 3864, the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Financing Act, removes the certainty of a continued revenue source for our transit systems as well as the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program.

Specifically, we are deeply concerned about the provision in H.R. 3864 that would terminate funding from the excise tax on gasoline and replace it with the Alternative Transportation Account. In place of gasoline tax revenues, the legislation would provide a one-time \$40 billion transfer of General Fund revenues to the Alternative Transportation Account. Not only is this level of funding insufficient to fully fund the proposed authorized levels for the Alternative Transportation Account, but it would subject transit and CMAQ funding to the annual appropriations process. This change will make it impossible for public transit systems across the country to plan for the future. It will also make it impossible for the FTA to honor grant agreements.

In addition, this legislation does not make clear how the \$40 billion in General Fund revenues will be offset in the U.S. budget. As a result of this funding gap, we are concerned that the \$40 billion general revenue transfer may not occur leaving transit programs out in the cold.

We strongly encourage the Committee to reject H.R. 3864 and work to continue to fund highway and transit programs through dedicated funding.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Melaniphy  
President & CEO  
American Public Transportation  
Association

John Robert Smith  
President and CEO  
Reconnecting America

Joyce A. Rogers  
Senior Vice President, Government  
Affairs  
AARP

Jim Sayer  
Executive Director  
Adventure Cycling Association

Jeff Miller  
President / CEO  
Alliance for Biking & Walking

Jeff Rosenberg  
Legislative Director  
Amalgated Transit Union

Caron Whitaker  
Campaign Director  
America Bikes

Scott Bricker  
Executive Director  
America Walks

Kristy Anderson  
Government Relations Manager  
American Heart  
Association/American Stroke  
Association

Andrew Goldberg  
Managing Director, Gov't Relations  
American Institute of Architects

James Corless  
Director  
Transportation for America

Geoff Anderson  
President & CEO  
Smart Growth America

Jason Jordan  
Director of Policy & Government  
Affairs  
American Planning Association

Don Hoppert  
Director, Government Relations  
American Public Health Association  
(APHA)

Brian Pallasch, CAE  
Managing Director, Government  
Relations & Infrastructure Initiatives  
American Society of Civil Engineers

Richard Eidlin  
Policy Director  
American Sustainable Business  
Council

Brian Shaw  
President  
Association for Commuter  
Transportation

Billy Altom  
Executive Director  
Association of Programs for Rural  
Independent Living (APRIL)

Marcia L Hale  
President  
Building America's Future

Mike Kruglik  
Executive Director  
Building One America

Steve Winkelman  
Director, Transportation Program  
Center for Clean Air Policy

Jacky Grimshaw  
Vice President of Policy  
Center for Neighborhood Technology

Tim Marema  
Vice President  
Center for Rural Strategies

Margo Wootan  
Director, Nutrition Policy  
Center for Science in the Public  
Interest

Center on Race, Poverty and the  
Environment

Stewart Schwartz  
Executive Director  
Coalition for Smarter Growth

Scott Bogren  
Communications Director  
Community Transportation  
Association of America

John Norquist  
President  
Congress for the New Urbanism

Michael A. Spotts  
Policy Analyst  
Enterprise Community Partners

John Cross  
Federal Transportation Advocate  
Environment America

Ana Garcia-Ashley  
Executive Director  
Gamaliel

Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins  
CEO  
Green For All

Paul Weech  
Executive Vice President for Policy  
and Member Engagement  
Housing Partnership Network

Michael Replogle  
Global Policy Director and Founder  
Institute for Transportation &  
Development Policy

Fred McLuckie  
Legislative Director  
International Brotherhood of  
Teamsters

David T. Downey  
President/CEO  
International Downtown Association

Just Transition Alliance

Peter Notarstefano  
Director of Home and Community-  
Based Services  
LeadingAge

Andrew Clarke  
President  
League of American Bicyclists

Sara Chieffo  
Legislative Director  
League of Conservation Voters

Niel Ritchie  
Executive Director  
League of Rural Voters

Christopher Coes  
Director  
LOCUS: Responsible Real Estate  
Developers and Investors

Ron Thaniel  
Executive Director  
National Association of City  
Transportation Officials

Bob Fogel  
Senior Legislative Director  
National Association of Counties

Eli Briggs  
Govt Affairs Director  
National Association of County & City  
Health Officials

Sean Jeans-Gail  
Vice President  
National Association of Railroad  
Passengers

Darren Smith  
Policy Representative; Smart Growth  
and State & Local Issues  
National Association of Realtors

Mark Plotz  
Conference Director  
National Center for Bicycling &  
Walking

Melissa Merson  
Executive Director  
National Coalition for Promoting  
Physical Activity

Barbara McCann  
Executive Director  
National Complete Streets Coalition

National Economic and Social Rights  
Initiative

Ethan Handelman  
Vice President for Policy and  
Advocacy  
National Housing Conference

Michael Bodaken  
Executive Director  
National Housing Trust

Leslie Wollack  
Program Director  
National League of Cities

Sheila Crowley  
President and CEO  
National Low Income Housing  
Coalition

Chuck Baker  
President  
National Railroad Construction and  
Maintenance Association

Madura Wijewardena (on behalf of the  
CEO, Marc Morial)  
Director, Research & Policy  
National Urban League Policy Institute

Deron Lovaas  
Federal Transportation Policy Director  
Natural Resources Defense Council

Jeff Boothe  
Chair  
New Starts Working Group and  
Community Streetcar Coalition

Robert H. McNulty  
President  
Partners for Livable Communities

Leslie Moody  
Executive Director  
Partnership for Working Families

Anita Hairston  
Senior Associate  
PolicyLink

Virginia Lee  
Program Manager  
Prevention Institute

Tyson Slocum  
Director, Energy Program  
Public Citizen

Kevin Mills  
Vice President of Policy and Trail  
Development  
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Margo Pedroso  
Deputy Director  
Safe Routes to School National  
Partnership

Jesse Prentice-Dunn  
Washington Representative  
Sierra Club

Ron Kloos  
National Vice President/National  
Legislative Director  
TCU/IAM

Stephan Kline  
Associate vice president  
The Jewish Federations of North  
America

KJ Hertz  
The National Association of Area  
Agencies on Aging (n4a)

Portia White  
Director, Political Department  
Transport Workers Union of America,  
AFL-CIO

Laura Barrett  
Executive Director  
Transportation Equity Network

Bryan Howard  
Legislative Director  
U.S. Green Building Council

Andy Kunz  
President & CEO  
U.S. High Speed Rail Association

Janet F. Kavinoky  
Executive Director, Transportation &  
Infrastructure, Vice President,  
Americans for Transportation  
Mobility  
United States Chamber of Commerce

Phineas Baxandall  
Senior Analyst for Tax and Budget  
Policy  
United States Public Interest Research  
Group (U.S. PIRG)

Leo Gerard  
President  
United Steelworkers

Heidi Guenin  
Transportation Policy Coordinator  
Upstream Public Health

James Engelhardt  
Director, Affordable Housing  
Development  
Volunteers of America

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The Honorable Governor John Kitzhaber  
Governor of Oregon

The Honorable Governor Christine Gregoire  
Governor of Washington

## **State Departments of Transportation**

Shailen Bhatt  
Secretary  
Delaware Department of Transportation

Beverley Swaim-Staley  
Secretary  
Maryland Department of Transportation

Matthew Garrett  
Director  
Oregon Department of Transportation

Paula Hammond  
Secretary  
Washington State Department of Transportation

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Howard Learner  
Executive Director  
Environmental Law & Policy Center  
Chicago, IL

### **NORTHEAST**

Melissa Hoffer  
Vice President, Director  
Conservation Law Foundation  
Boston, MA

### **SOUTHEAST**

Trip Pollard  
Director, Land and Community Program  
Southern Environmental Law Center  
Equity and Inclusion Campaign  
AL, MS, LA

### **ARKANSAS**

John Squires  
CEO  
Community Resource Group, Inc  
Fayetteville, AR

Jeff Mansker  
Para-Transit Coordinator  
Jonesboro Economical Transportation  
System  
Jonesboro, AR

**ARIZONA**

Rose Arck  
President  
ACS Realty Services  
Phoenix, AZ

Diane Brown  
Executive Director  
Arizona Public Interest Research Group

James Dickey  
Executive Director  
Arizona Transit Association  
Fountain Hills, AZ

Tom Finnerty  
Executive Committee Member  
ASREA  
Phoenix, AZ

Caroline Tillman  
President  
Associated Right of Way, LLC  
Glendale, AZ

Scott Reynolds  
Senior Project Manager  
Blood Systems Inc.  
Scottsdale, AZ

Mike James  
Transit Services Director  
City of Mesa  
Mesa, AZ

The Honorable Mayor Greg Stanton  
City of Phoenix  
Phoenix, AZ

Lisa Williams  
President  
Excellence by Design  
Phoenix, AZ

Chris Wass  
Founder  
Firefly Real Estate LLC  
Phoenix, AZ

David Schwartz  
Executive Director  
Friends of Transit  
Phoenix, AZ

Gregory A Walker  
Vice President  
Huitt-Zollars  
Phoenix, AZ

Rhonda Bannard  
Founder and Chief Connector  
Inspired Connections  
Phoenix, AZ

Jonce Walker  
Sustainability Manager  
Maricopa County  
Phoenix, AZ

Walt Gray  
Coordinator  
Merchants for a Better Maryvale  
Phoenix, AZ

Gwynn Simpson  
CEO  
Phoenix Rising Consultants-HCD  
Chandler, AZ

Edward Jensen  
Co-chair, Executive Committee  
SideWalk Phoenix  
Phoenix, AZ

Steve Banta  
CEO  
Valley Metro Rail, Inc. (METRO light rail)  
Phoenix, AZ

## **CALIFORNIA**

Will Wright  
Director, Government & Public Affairs  
AIA Los Angeles  
Los Angeles, CA

Mary King  
Interim General Manager  
Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District  
(AC Transit)  
Oakland, CA

Arnold Luft  
Principal  
ARUP  
Los Angeles, CA

Hugh Saurenman  
President  
ATS Consulting  
Pasadena, CA

Paul Steinberg  
Director of Americas  
Avego  
San Jose, CA

Andy Katz  
Government Relations Director  
Breathe California  
Daly City, CA

Neal Richman  
Director of Programs and Advocacy  
Breathe California of Los Angeles County  
Los Angeles, CA

Bus Riders Union  
Los Angeles, CA

Matt Schwartz  
President & CEO  
California Housing Partnership  
Corporation  
San Francisco, CA

Ruben Cantu  
Program Director  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
Oakland, Sacramento, CA

Jon Fox  
CalPIRG Consumer Advocate  
California Public Interest Research Group

Wendy Alfsen  
Executive Director  
California WALKS  
Berkeley, CA

Betsy Reifsnider  
Environmental Justice Director  
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Stockton  
Stockton, CA

Reyna Villalobos  
Community Lead  
Central California Regional Obesity  
Prevention Program  
Madera, CA

Kenneth Grimes  
Executive Director  
CHCDC  
San Diego, CA

Rick Hutchinson  
CEO  
City CarShare  
San Francisco, CA

Kristin Sherwood  
CSC  
City of Beaumont  
Beaumont, CA



Nelson D. Nelson  
City Engineer  
City of Corona Public Works Department  
Corona, CA

Brian Champion  
Transportation Planning Manager  
City of Corona Transit Service  
Corona, CA

The Honorable Mayor Ashley Swearengin  
City of Fresno  
Fresno, CA

The Honorable Mayor Jean Quan  
City of Oakland  
Oakland, CA

Virginia Field  
Vice President  
Clean Air Now  
Riverside, CA

Jonathan Parfrey  
Executive Director  
Climate Resolve  
Los Angeles, CA

Martin Schlageter  
Campaign Director  
Coalition for Clean Air

Eva Inbar  
Board member  
Coalition for Sustainable Transportation  
Santa Barbara, CA

Michael Chiacos  
Transportation Specialist  
Community Environmental Council  
Santa Barbara, CA

Victor Griego  
President  
Diverse Strategies for Organizing, Inc.  
Los Angeles, CA

Lars Clutterham  
Partner  
downeygreen  
Downey, CA

Cheryl Dye  
Principal  
Dye & Assoc  
San Diego, CA

Dave Campbell  
Program Director  
East Bay Bicycle Coalition  
Oakland, CA

Michael Fitts  
Staff Attorney  
Endangered Habitats League  
Santa Monica, CA

Heather Hood  
Director of Programs, Northern California  
Enterprise Community Partners  
San Francisco, CA

David Dutchen  
Area Sales Manager  
Enterprise Rideshare  
Carson, CA

Matthew Baker  
Habitat Director  
Environmental Council of Sacramento  
Sacramento, CA

Hilary Norton  
Executive Director  
FAST - Fixing Angelenos Stuck in Traffic  
Los Angeles, CA

Matt Henry  
President/CEO  
Fehr & Peers  
Walnut Creek, CA

Jack Swearingen  
Chair  
Friends of SMART  
Santa Rosa, CA

Stephanie Taylor  
Interim Executive Director  
Green LA Coalition  
Los Angeles, CA

Stephanie Reyes  
Policy Director  
Greenbelt Alliance  
California

Maria E. Pacheco  
Consultant  
Head West Inc.  
Compton, CA

Ginger Hitzke  
President  
Hitzke Development Corporation  
San Marcos, CA

Kevin Norton  
Assistant Business Manager  
IBEW 11  
Los Angeles, CA

Johnny O'Kane  
Business Agent  
Ironworkers Local #433  
Los Angeles, CA

Jose A. Naranjo  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary-  
Treasurer  
Ironworkers Local Union 229  
San Diego, CA

Keith H. Ker  
Brigadier General (Ret.)  
Santa Rosa, CA

Jackelyn Cornejo  
Senior Research/Policy Analyst  
Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy  
(LAANE)  
Los Angeles, CA

Jessica Duboff  
Public Policy Manager  
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce  
Los Angeles, CA

Alexis Lantz  
Planning & Policy Director  
Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition  
Los Angeles, CA

Deborah Murphy  
Founder  
Los Angeles Walks  
Los Angeles, CA

Corey Carlisle  
Director, Federal Policy and Government  
Affairs  
Low Income Investment Fund  
San Francisco, CA

Andy Peri  
Advocacy Director  
Marin County Bicycle Coalition  
Fairfax, CA

Steve Heminger  
Executive Director  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
Oakland, CA

Carl Sedoryk  
General Manager / CEO  
Monterey-Salinas Transit District  
Monterey, CA, CA

Denny Zane  
Executive Director  
Move LA  
Los Angeles, CA

Elyse Lowe  
Executive Director  
Move San Diego  
San Diego, CA

Jennifer Kalt  
Secretary  
Northcoast Environmental Center  
Arcata, CA

Bruce Reznik  
Executive Director  
Planning and Conservation League  
Sacramento, CA

Guillermo Mayer  
Senior Staff Attorney  
Public Advocates Inc.  
San Francisco, CA

Anthony Hernandez  
Transportation Planner  
RBF Consulting  
California

Anna Maria Havens  
Systems Change Advocate  
Resources for Independence Central  
Valley  
Fresno, CA

Eric Ustation  
Government Affairs Representative  
Riverside Transit Agency  
Riverside, CA

John Smatlak  
President  
RPR Consulting  
Los Angeles, CA

Ryan Snyder  
President  
Ryan Snyder Associates  
Los Angeles, CA

Kendra Bridges  
Land Use Policy Director  
Sacramento Housing Alliance  
Sacramento, CA

Chris Morfas  
Legislative Liaison  
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality  
Management District  
Sacramento, CA

Evan McLaughlin  
Political and Legislative Director  
San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor  
Council, AFL-CIO  
San Diego, CA

Jim Lazarus  
Senior Vice President  
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce  
San Francisco, CA

Krute Singa  
Manager, TDM Programs  
San Francisco Department of the  
Environment  
San Francisco, CA

Edward D. Reiskin  
Director  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation  
Agency  
San Francisco, CA

Howard Strassner  
Secretary  
Save Muni  
California

Kate Breen  
Government Affairs Manager  
SFMTA  
San Francisco, CA

Steven Frisch  
President  
Sierra Business Council  
Truckee, CA

Paul Zimmerman  
Executive Director  
Southern California Assoc. of Non-Profit  
Housing

John Rosenthal  
President  
Southpaw Communications  
Santa Monica, CA

Egon Terplan  
Regional Planning Director  
SPUR  
San Francisco, CA

Arthur J. Hadnett  
Vice President - Transportation  
Stantec  
Northridge, CA

Greg Bashem  
Worker Representative/Political  
Coordinator/Volunteer  
Organizer/Delegate IBT, JC 42, L.A.-O.C  
Building Trades, L.A. County Federation of  
Labor/ Metal Trades Council  
Teamsters Local 986  
South El Monte, CA

Bart Reed  
Executive Director  
The Transit Coalition  
San Fernando, CA

Patrick Merrick  
Executive Vice-President  
Tolar Manufacturing Company Inc  
Corona, CA

Gary Tolar  
Owner  
Tolar Mfg. Co Inc.  
Corona, CA

Bart Reed  
Executive Director  
Train Riders Association of California  
(TRAC)  
San Fernando, CA

Stuart Cohen  
Executive Director  
TransForm  
Oakland, CA

Francisca Porchas  
National Coordinator  
Transit Riders for Public Transportation  
Los Angeles, CA

David A Raley  
Chairman  
Transportation NOW  
Moreno Valley, CA

Ernestine Bonn  
Treasurer  
UHCDC  
San Diego, CA

Bob Allen  
Transportation Justice Program Director  
Urban Habitat  
Oakland, CA

Michael Cassadine  
Director  
Voice for the People  
Los Angeles, CA

Victor H. Spencer  
National Account Executive  
VPSI  
Sacramento, CA

Jonathan Bair  
Board President  
Walk Oakland Bike Oakland  
Oakland, CA

Terry Preston  
Complete Streets Coordinator  
WALKSacramento  
Sacramento, CA

James Stone  
Executive Director  
WalkSanDiego  
San Diego, CA

Charles Anderson  
General Manager  
Western Contra Costa Transit Authority  
Pinole, CA

Jerard Wright  
Director  
Wright Concept  
Los Angeles, CA

Jeremy Merz  
Policy Advocate  
California Chamber of Commerce

Ron Sundergill  
Sr. Director, Pacific Region  
National Parks Conservation Association  
San Francisco, CA

## **COLORADO**

Audrey DeBarros  
Executive Director  
36 Commuting Solutions  
Louisville, CO

Deven Meininger  
Multi Modal Specialist  
City of Durango  
Durango, CO

Alice Laird  
Executive Director  
Clean Energy Economy for the Region  
Carbondale, CO

Danny Katz  
State Director  
Colorado Public Interest Research Group

Brad Weinig  
TOD Program Director  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Denver, CO

Helen Bushnell  
Owner  
Train Star  
Lakewood, CO

Kathleen Osher  
Executive Director  
Transit Alliance  
Denver, CO

## **CONNECTICUT**

Nichole Strack  
Executive Director  
1000 Friends of Connecticut  
Hartford, CT

MaryEllen Thibodeau  
President  
Bike Walk Connecticut

Debra Greenwood  
CEO/President  
Center for Women and Families of  
Eastern Fairfield County  
Bridgeport, CT

Mary Tomolonius  
Executive Director  
Connecticut Association for Community  
Transportation  
Canton, CT

Molly McKay  
Transportation Chair  
Connecticut Chapter of Sierra Club  
Mystic, CT

Lori Brown  
Executive Director  
Connecticut League of Conservation  
Voters Education Fund  
Hartford, CT

Mark Abraham  
Steering Committee Member  
Connecticut Livable Streets Campaign

Jill Kely  
Co-Chair  
Connecticut-Citizens Transportation  
Lobby

Andy McDonald  
ConnPIRG Policy Advisor  
Connecticut Public Interest Research  
Group

Barbara Kalosky  
President  
North East Transportation Co. Inc.  
Waterbury, CT

Karen Burnaska  
Coordinator  
Transit for Connecticut  
Monroe, CT

#### **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Advancement Project  
Washington, DC

Theron White  
Manager  
Copenhaver, Inc.  
Washington, DC

Julie Gould  
Senior Vice President  
Mercy Housing  
Washington, DC

Douglas Franklin  
Marketing Specialist  
Metropolitan Washington Council of  
Governments  
Washington, DC

Jason Pavluchuk  
President  
Pavluchuk & Associates  
Washington, DC

Jason Broehm  
Chair  
Streetcars4DC  
Washington, DC

Paul Dean  
Vice President  
TransitCenter  
Washington, DC

David Holder  
Owner  
William Lewis House, LLC  
Washington, DC

#### **FLORIDA**

Charles G. Pattison, FAICP  
President and CEO  
1000 Friends of Florida  
Tallahassee, FL

Jeffrey Lewin  
business development manager  
All Area Bicycle  
Boynton Beach, FL

Darla Letourneau  
Steering Group Member  
BikeWalkLee  
Sanibel, FL

Susan Stechnij  
Board Member  
Citizens 4 Transit  
West Palm Beach, FL

Patricia Zeiler  
Managing Director  
Downtown Fort Lauderdale TMA  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Brad Ashwell  
Advocate  
Florida Public Interest Research Group

Wes Watson  
Executive Director  
Florida Public Transportation Association  
Tampa, FL

John Hopkins  
Executive Director  
Green Mobility Network  
Miami, FL

Denis Eirikis  
Communications Manager  
IM4Transit Campaign  
Tampa, FL

William Shrout  
Supervisor  
Lee Tran  
Fort Myers, FL

G. Seth Platt  
Project Manager  
LSN Partners  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Gloria Katz  
Founder  
Smart Growth Partnership  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Terry Stick  
Vice President  
The Stick Group  
Florida

Brian Seel  
Chairman  
TRANSITION Tampa Bay  
Tampa, FL

## **GEORGIA**

Ashley Robbins  
President  
Citizens for Progressive Transit  
Atlanta, GA

Richard Mendoza  
Commissioner of Public Works  
City of Atlanta  
Atlanta, GA  
The Honorable Mayor Robert Reichert  
City of Macon, GA  
Macon, GA

Environmental Justice Resource Center  
Atlanta, GA

Jessica Wilson  
Georgia PIRG Program Associate  
Georgia Public Interest Research Group

Transit Riders Union Jobs With Justice  
Atlanta, GA

## **IOWA**

LaVon Griffieon  
Interim Executive Director  
1000 Friends of Iowa  
Des Moines, IA

Sonia Ashe  
Iowa PIRG Advocate  
Iowa Public Interest Research Group

## **IDAHO**

Lisa Brady  
Co-director  
Ada Bike Alliance  
Ada, ID

Jim Buffington  
Manager  
Ada County Highway District  
Garden City, ID

Linda Hieter  
Board Chair  
Canyon Area Bus Service  
Riggins, ID

Gary Segers  
Founder  
Citizens for an Open Greenbelt  
Garden City, ID

Shannon Grow  
Transit Manager  
City of Lewiston  
Lewiston, ID

Gary J. Riedner  
City Supervisor  
City of Moscow, ID

Clifton Warren  
District 1 Mobility Manager  
CTAI  
Sandpoint, ID

Heather Wheeler  
Executive Director  
Community Transportation Association of  
Idaho (CTAI)  
Boise, ID

John Murray  
Mobility Manager Dist 2  
CTAI  
Lewiston, ID

Carl Root  
District 2 Representative  
District 2 Public Transportation Advisory  
Commission  
Idaho

Rachel Winer  
Executive Director  
Idaho Smart Growth  
Boise, ID

Steven Wolper  
Board Member  
Mountain Rides Transportation Authority  
Ketchum, ID

Dave Hunt  
Transit Director  
Pocatello Regional Transit  
Pocatello, ID

Marion Johnson  
Director  
Selkirks-Pend Oreille Transit  
Dover, ID

Kelli Fairless  
Executive Director  
Valley Regional Transit  
Meridian, ID

## **ILLINOIS**

Ron Burke  
Executive Director  
Active Transportation Alliance  
Chicago, IL



Dwayne Lawrence  
President/CEO  
Affordable Housing Consortium, Inc.  
Chicago, IL

Bruce Ratain  
Clean Energy Associate  
Environment Illinois

Kim Green  
President  
GFI Genfare  
Elk Grove, IL

Phil Hanegraaf  
Vice President  
HNTB  
Chicago, IL

Brian Imus  
Director  
Illinois PIRG  
Chicago, IL

Mike Pitula  
Organizer  
Little Village for Environmental Justice  
Organization  
Chicago, IL

Sam Smith  
Legislative Affairs Officer  
Metra Commuter Rail Chicago  
Chicago, IL

Peter Skosey  
Vice President  
Metropolitan Planning Council  
Chicago, IL

Richard Harnish  
Executive Director  
Midwest High Speed Rail Association

Mary Kay Christopher  
Owner  
MKC Associates  
Berwyn, IL

Will Tanzman  
Co-Executive Director  
Southsiders Organized for Unity and  
Liberation  
Chicago, IL

Jeff Worley  
Sr. Business Analyst  
United Airlines  
Chicago, IL

Robert W. Guy  
State Legislative Director  
United Transportation Union-Illinois  
Legislative Board  
Chicago, IL

Steve Schlickman  
Executive Director  
University of Illinois at Chicago Urban  
Transportation Center  
Chicago, IL

Valerie Kretchmer  
President  
Valerie S. Kretchmer Associates, Inc.  
Evanston, IL

Tom Zucker  
Executive director  
Voluntary Action Center of DeKalb County  
Sycamore, IL

## **INDIANA**

Jamie Palmer  
Legislative Chair  
American Planning Association Indiana  
Chapter  
Indianapolis, IN

Kent McDaniel  
Vice Chairman  
Bloomington Public Transportation  
Corporation, Board of Directors  
Bloomington, IN

Thomas Tokarski  
President  
Citizens for Appropriate Rural Roads  
Bloomington, IN

Mindy Martynowicz  
Executive Director  
Fulton County Council on Aging  
Rochester, IN

Kim Irwin  
Executive Director  
Health by Design  
Indianapolis, IN

Jesse Kharbanda  
Executive Director  
Hoosier Environmental Council  
Indianapolis, IN

Amelia Miller  
Chair  
Indiana Citizens' Alliance for Transit  
Indianapolis, IN

Jamie Palmer  
Chair  
Indiana Land Use Consortium  
Indianapolis, IN

Kent McDaniel  
Executive Director  
Indiana Transportation Association  
Bloomington, IN

Lori Miser  
Executive Director  
Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning  
Organization  
Indianapolis, IN

Kevin Whited  
Executive Director  
INDYCOG  
Indianapolis, IN

Elaine McGuire  
Transportation Manager  
Janus Developmental Services  
Noblesville, IN

Becky Allen  
Director of Transportation  
Johnson County Association for Retarded  
Citizens/ Access Johnson County  
Franklin, IN

Matt Boren  
General Manager  
Kosciusko Area Bus Service  
Warsaw, IN

Beverly Ferry  
CEO  
Living Well in Wabash County CoA, Inc.  
Wabash, IN

Jerrold Bridges  
Executive Director  
Madison County Council of Governments  
Anderson, IN

Kevin Crawford  
Vice Chair  
South Shore Trails  
East Chicago, IN

Meg Storrow  
President  
Storrow Kinsella Associates  
Indianapolis, IN

**KANSAS**

Sarah Krom  
Transportation Coordinator  
Sunflower Diversified Services  
Great Bend, KS

**LOUISIANA**

Advocates for Environmental Human  
Rights  
New Orleans, LA

Anne Timmons-Harris  
Owner  
A.R.T.  
New Orleans, LA

Paul Brumfield  
President  
Baton Rouge Rider's Advisory Group  
(BRRAG)  
Baton Rouge, LA

Linda Stone  
New Orleans Program & Operations  
Director  
Global Green USA  
New Orleans, LA

Marla Newman  
Executive Director  
Louisiana Housing Alliance  
Baton Rouge, LA

**MASSACHUSETTS**

Monica G. Tibbits  
Executive Director  
128 Business Council  
Waltham, MA

Ace-Transit Riders Union  
Boston, MA

Kalila Barnett  
Executive Director  
Alternatives for Community and  
Environment  
Boston, MA

Gretchen M. Ashton  
President  
Ashton Associates Inc.  
Boston, MA

Steven E. Miller  
Director  
Boston GreenRoutes  
Boston, MA

Nancy Goodman  
VP for Policy  
Environmental League of Massachusetts

Joan Tighe  
Coordinator  
Fairmount/Indigo Line CDC Collaborative  
Boston, MA

Pamela Bender  
Senior Organizer  
Massachusetts Association of CDCs  
Boston, MA

David Watson  
Executive Director  
Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition  
Boston, MA

Elizabeth Weyant  
Staff Attorney  
MASSPIRG  
Boston, MA

Howard Ostroff  
Principal  
StarTran Software  
Dedham, MA

Zachary Tucker  
Founder  
Students Against T Cuts  
Boston, MA

Wendy Landman  
Executive Director  
WalkBoston  
Boston, MA

## **MARYLAND**

Dru Schmidt-Perkins  
Executive Director  
1000 Friends of Maryland  
Baltimore, MD

Paul Graziano  
Housing Commissioner  
City of Baltimore Department of Housing  
and Community Development  
Baltimore, MD

Chelsea Arkin  
Enterprise Green Communities  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Baltimore, MD

Ronald J. Wilson  
Director of Housing Initiatives  
Enterprise Homes, Inc.  
Baltimore, MD

Mark Counselman  
Founder  
Friends of the Charles St. Trolley  
Baltimore, MD

Rohit Patel, CEO  
Intelect Corporation  
Baltimore, MD

Jenny Levin  
Maryland Public Interest Research Group

Robert Goldman  
President  
Montgomery Housing Partnership  
Silver Spring, MD

David Reznick  
Chairman  
Reznick Group  
Bethesda, MD

Jeffrey Stern  
Principal  
Riverside Advisors, LLC  
Baltimore, MD

Kent Watkins  
CEO  
TOD Associates  
Bethesda, MD

## **MAINE**

Tony Donovan  
Founding member  
Maine Rail Transit Coalition  
Portland, ME

## **MICHIGAN**

Jill Drury  
Manager  
Charlevoix County Transit  
Boyne City, MI

Bulkowski  
Executive Director  
Disability Advocates of Kent County  
Grand Rapids, MI

Michele McGowen  
Co-Chair  
Friends of Transit for Kalamazoo County  
Kalamazoo, MI

Tom Manderscheid  
Transportation Director  
Harbor Transit  
Grand Haven, MI

John Drury  
Administrator  
MASSTrans  
Bay City, MI

Marie Donigan  
Consultant  
McKenna Associates  
Royal Oak, MI

Ron Schalow  
Executive Director  
Mecosta Osceola Transit Authority  
Big Rapids, MI

Robert Tischbein  
Chairman  
Michigan Association of Railroad  
Passengers  
Livonia, MI

Tim Fischer  
Deputy Policy Director  
Michigan Environmental Council  
Lansing, MI

Jim Lively  
Program Director  
Michigan Land Use Institute  
Traverse City, MI

Daniel Luria  
Vice President Research  
Michigan Manufacturing Technology  
Center  
Plymouth, MI

Arnold Weinfeld  
Director, Strategic Initiatives and Federal  
Affairs  
Michigan Municipal League  
Lansing, MI

Meghan Hess  
Michigan Public Interest Research Group

Clark Harder  
Executive Director  
Michigan Public Transit Association  
Owosso, MI

Peter Hughes  
Sustainable Development Specialist  
Michigan State Housing Development  
Authority  
Lansing, MI

Richard Murphy  
Transportation Director  
Michigan Suburbs Alliance  
Ferndale, MI

John Swatosh  
Deputy General Manager Administration  
SMART  
Detroit, MI

Kimberly O'Haver  
President  
Transportation Management, Inc.  
St. Joseph, MI

Megan Owens  
Executive Director  
Transportation Riders United  
Detroit, MI

## **MINNESOTA**

Russ Adams  
Executive Director  
Alliance for Metropolitan Stability  
Minneapolis, MN

Mr. Jon Wertjes, PE, PTOE  
Director of Traffic & Parking Services  
City of Minneapolis  
Minneapolis, MN

Jim Heilig  
Director of Administration and Planning  
Duluth Transit Authority  
Duluth, MN

Ethan Fawley  
Transportation Policy Director  
Fresh Energy  
St. Paul, MN

Doran Schrantz  
Executive Director  
ISAIAH  
Minneapolis, MN

James L. Erkel  
Director, Land Use and Transportation  
Program  
Minnesota Center for Environmental  
Advocacy  
Saint Paul, MN

Tony Kellen  
President  
Minnesota Public Transit Association  
St. Cloud, MN

Margaret Donahoe  
Executive Director  
Minnesota Transportation Alliance  
St. Paul, MN

Jessica Treat  
Executive Director  
St. Paul Smart Trips  
St. Paul, MN

Bill Neuendorf  
Director of Advocacy  
Transit for Livable Communities  
Saint Paul, MN

## **MISSOURI**

Kim Cella  
Executive Director  
Citizens for Modern Transit  
St. Louis, MO

Eric Friedman  
President  
Housing and Community Solutions  
St. Louis, MO

Kite Singleton  
Chair  
Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance  
Kansas City, MO

Steve Blackledge  
MOPIRG Policy Advisor  
Missouri Public Interest Research Group

Ann Mac  
Executive Director  
Trailnet  
St. Louis, MO

## **MONTANA**

Darlene Tussing  
Proprietor  
Active Transportation Alternatives  
Billings, MT

Nancy Wilson  
Director  
ASUM Transportation, The University of  
Montana  
Missoula, MT

David Kack  
Coordinator  
Big Sky Transportation District  
Bozeman, MT

Nash Emrich  
President  
BikeNet  
Billings, MT

Bill Cochran  
Chair  
Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board  
Bozeman, MT

Sam Haraldson  
Chairman  
Bozeman Bike Kitchen  
Bozeman, MT

John Rundquist, PE  
Director of Public Works  
City of Helena, Montana  
Helena, MT

Bob Jaffe  
Alderman  
City of Missoula City Council Ward 3  
Missoula, MT

Lisa Ballard  
President  
Current Transportation Solutions  
Bozeman, MT

Ed Gulick  
Architect  
High Plains Architects  
Billings, MT

Melanie Reynolds  
Health Officer  
Lewis and Clark City-County Health  
Department

John Wolverton  
Member / Volunteer  
Missoula Advocates for Sustainable  
Transportation  
Missoula, MT

Jason Wiener  
Alderman  
Missoula City Council  
Missoula, MT

Jean Belangie-Nye  
Chair  
Missoula-Lolo Trail Committee  
Lolo, MT

Bob Maffit  
Executive Director  
MT Independent Living Program  
Helena, MT

Barbara Schneeman  
Director, Communication & Advocacy  
RiverStone Health  
Billings, MT

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

Michael Sule  
Founder  
Asheville on Bikes  
Asheville, NC

Jeffrey Wharton  
President  
IMPulse NC LLC  
Mount Olive, NC

Allison Cairo  
NCPIRG Policy Advisor  
North Carolina Public Interest Research  
Group

The Honorable Mayor Gary T. Knox  
Former Mayor  
Town of Cornelius, NC

## **NORTH DAKOTA**

Robin Werre  
Executive Director  
BIS-MAN Transit  
Bismarck, ND

Dale Bergman  
Transportation Superintendent  
Grand Forks Cities Area Transit  
Grand Forks, ND

Kim Adair  
Transit Section Program Manager  
North Dakota Department of  
Transportation

Pam Landsem  
Director  
Walsh County Public Transportation  
Walsh County, ND

## **NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Addie Shankle  
New Hampshire Public Interest Research  
Group

## **NEW JERSEY**

Barbara Armand  
President  
Armand Corporation  
Cherry Hill, NJ

Doug O'Malley  
Field Director  
Environment New Jersey  
Trenton, NJ

Michael Groh  
Sr. Program Coordinator  
National Transit Institute  
New Brunswick, NJ

Jim Nicholson  
Executive Director  
New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition  
Ramsey, NJ

Peter Kasabach  
Executive Director  
New Jersey Future  
Trenton, NJ

Jennifer Kim  
Advocate  
New Jersey Public Interest Research  
Group (NJPIRG)  
Trenton, NJ

Rev. R. Lenton Buffalo Jr.  
President  
New Jersey Regional Coalition

Lucy Vandenberg  
Executive Director  
PlanSmart NJ  
Trenton, NJ

Dan Fatton  
Chairperson  
Trenton Cycling Revolution  
Trenton, NJ

## **NEW MEXICO**

Chainbreaker Collective  
Santa Fe, NM

Mary Lou Kemp  
Director  
Clovis Area Transit System  
Portales, NM

Eric Johnson  
Secretary  
New Mexico Chapter of the American  
Planning Association



Jon Bulthuis  
President  
New Mexico Passenger Transportation  
Association

Alexander Corkett  
NMPIRG Program Associate  
New Mexico Public Interest Research  
Group

Deanza Sapien  
Rio Grande Chapter-New Mexico Sierra  
Club

### **NEW YORK**

Chuck Wochele  
V.P. Industry & Government Relations  
Alstom Transportation  
New York

Willie Moorer  
Union Rep./Bus Operator  
ATU Local #1056  
Rosedale, NY

Mark Gerling  
FST Local  
ATU Local #1321  
Albany, NY

Vincent Crehan  
President/ BA  
ATU Local #1342  
Buffalo, NY

Jacques Chapman  
President  
ATU Local #282  
Rochester, NY

Chuck Watson  
IVP  
ATU of Syracuse  
Syracuse, NY

Kimberly Pettit  
President  
BikeLid LLC  
New York

Mary A. Donch  
Vice General Chairman  
BLE&T Metro-North General Committee  
New Rochelle, NY

Brittney Saunders  
Senior Advocate  
Center for Social Inclusion  
New York, NY

Michelle Gavin  
Director of Transit  
City of Beloit Transit  
Beloit, NY

COMMUTE  
New York, NY

Mark Ginsberg  
Partner  
Curtis + Ginsberg Architects  
New York, NY

DaShawn Pretlow  
CEO & Founder  
DP Regional Transport Service  
Brooklyn, NY

Peter Fleischer  
Executive Director  
Empire State Future  
Albany, NY

Scott Sopczyk  
Transportation Dir.  
Greater Glens Falls Transit  
Glen Falls, NY

Maxine Finkelstein  
Senior Transportation Analyst  
IEI  
New York, NY

Susan Gilbert  
President  
Interactive Elements Inc.  
New York, NY

Patti Bourne  
Executive Vice President  
Kimmel Housing Development  
Foundation  
New York

Jeremie Greer  
Senior Policy Officer  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation  
(LISC)  
New York, NY

New York City Environmental Justice  
Alliance  
New York, NY

Judy Calogero  
CEO  
New York Housing Conference  
Saratoga Springs & New York City, NY

Jeff Jones  
Director  
New York State Apollo Alliance  
Albany, NY

Gene Russianoff  
Senior Attorney  
NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign  
New York, NY

Elena Conte  
Organizer for Public Policy Campaigns  
Pratt Center for Community Development  
Brooklyn, NY

Mike Governale  
Director  
Reconnect Rochester  
Rochester, NY

Robert D. Yaro  
President  
Regional Plan Association  
New York, NY

Joshua A. Sannar  
Sustainable Business Practices  
Coordinator  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
Rochester, NY

Roxanne Warren  
Principal  
RWA Architects/vision42  
New York

Richard Clements  
Eastern Regional Manager  
Tolar Manufacturing Company Inc.  
Williamsville, NY

Rosemary Mascali  
Manager  
Transit Solutions  
Manhasset, NY

Paul Steely White  
Executive Director  
Transportation Alternatives  
New York, NY

Steven Higashide  
Federal Advocate  
Tri-State Transportation Campaign  
New York, NY

Frank Hotchkiss  
District Political Coordinator  
United Steelworkers of Buffalo  
Buffalo, NY

UPROSE  
New York, NY

Eric Alexander  
Executive Director  
Vision Long Island  
Northport, NY

Dan Neuburger  
President Commuter Services  
WageWorks  
New York, NY

WE ACT for Environmental Justice  
New York, NY

Maria C. Garcia  
Board Director  
WTS International  
New York, NY

## **OHIO**

Janice C Monks  
President/CEO  
American Association of Service  
Coordinators Ohio

Brian Higgins  
Principal  
Arch City Development Group  
Columbus, OH

Matthew M. Dutkevicz  
Assistant General Manager  
Butler County Regional Transit Authority  
Hamilton, OH

Mike Scholl  
Director  
Chillicothe Transit System  
Chillicothe, OH

Edward W Schock  
Councilman  
City of Riverside  
Riverside, OH

Joseph Calabrese  
General Manager  
Greater Cleveland Regional Transit  
Authority  
Cleveland, OH

Robert K. Pfaff  
Executive Director & Secretary Treasurer  
METRO Regional Transit Authority  
Akron, OH

Len Montgomery  
Ohio PIRG Organizing Director  
Ohio Public Interest Research Group

Bill Lowe  
Transit Director  
Ottawa County Transportation Agency  
(OCTA)  
Oak Harbor, OH

Carrie Handy  
Chief Planner  
Sandusky Transit System  
Sandusky, OH

## **OKLAHOMA**

Wayne Wickham  
Manager of Operations  
Cleveland Area Rapid Transit  
Norman, OK

Tom Elmore  
Chairman  
Oklahoma Transportation Options  
Moore, OK

Elaine Meek  
Chair  
Transit Matters  
Tulsa, OK

**OREGON**

Jason Miner  
Executive Director  
1000 Friends of Oregon  
Portland, OR

Donald Leap  
President  
Association of Oregon Rail and Transit  
Advocates  
Portland, OR

Rob Sadowsky  
Executive Director  
Bicycle Transportation Alliance  
Portland, OR

The Honorable Mayor Denny Doyle  
City of Beaverton  
Beaverton, OR

Mara Gross  
Policy Director  
Coalition for a Livable Future  
Portland, OR

C. Scott Richman  
Senior Associate  
David Evans and Associates, Inc.  
Portland, OR

Stuart Liebowitz  
Facilitator  
Douglas County Global Warming Coalition  
Roseburg, OR

Sami Fournier  
Owner  
Element Exercise  
Bend, OR

Adolph "Val" Valfre, Jr.  
Executive Director  
Housing Authority of Washington County,  
Oregon  
Hillsboro, OR

Carolyn Harvey  
Healthy Communities Program  
Coordinator  
Jefferson County Public Health  
Department  
Oregon

Daniel Kinkler  
Chair  
Lane County Young Democrats  
Springfield, OR

Ron Kilcoyne  
General Manager  
Lane Transit District  
Eugene, OR

The Honorable Mayor Kitty Piercy  
City of Eugene  
Eugene, OR

The Honorable Mayor Sam Adams  
City of Portland  
Portland, OR

Tom Hughes  
Metro Council President  
Metro Regional Government  
Portland, OR

Beth Ann Beamer  
Director, Community Health  
Mountain View Hospital  
Madras, OR

Kelly Rodgers  
Program Manager  
North American Sustainable  
Transportation Council  
Oregon Action  
Portland, OR

Christine Hagerbaumer  
Deputy Director  
Oregon Environmental Council  
Portland, OR

Dave Rosenfeld  
Executive Director  
Oregon State Public Interest Research  
Group (OSPIRG)

Jonathan Ostar  
Director  
Organizing People-Activating Leaders-  
Bus Riders Unite  
Portland, OR

Rick Finn  
Federal Affairs Manager  
Port of Portland (Oregon)  
Portland, OR

Allan Pollock  
General Manager  
Salem-Keizer Transit  
Salem, OR

Ray Burstedt  
President  
SEDCOR  
Salem, OR

Kate Wells  
Director of Community Outreach  
St. Charles Health System  
Bend, OR

Michael Mehaffy  
Executive Director  
Sustasis Foundation  
Portland, OR

David Brook  
Managing Partner  
Team Red US  
Portland, OR

Chandra Brown  
President  
United Streetcar  
Oregon

Todd Borkowitz  
Legislative Committee CoChair  
Willamette Pedestrian Coalition  
Portland, OR

## **PENNSYLVANIA**

Bijan Pashanamaei  
Senior Vice President  
AECOM  
Pennsylvania

Patrick McMahon  
President/Business Agent  
Amalgamated Transit Union  
Pittsburgh, PA

Christopher J. Menna, P.E.  
Region 2 Governor  
American Society of Civil Engineers  
Philadelphia, PA

John R. Clark  
Manager, Aftermarket Sales Department  
Bombardier Transportation  
Pittsburgh, PA

Hugh A. Mose  
General Manager  
Centre Area Transportation Authority  
State College, PA

The Honorable Deputy Mayor Rina Cutler  
Deputy Mayor, Transportation and  
Utilities  
City of Philadelphia

Joseph Minott  
Executive Director  
Clean Air Council  
Philadelphia, PA

John Nawn  
Executive Vice President  
Czop/Specter  
Pennsylvania

David Bennett  
Chairman  
Delaware County Cycling Committee of  
the BCGP  
Lansdowne, PA

Cecile Charlton  
Executive Director  
Delaware County TMA  
Media, PA

Andy Sharpe  
Communications Director  
Delaware Valley Association of Rail  
Passengers (DVARP)  
Philadelphia, PA

Molly Duffy  
President  
Earthsmart Consulting  
Pennsylvania

Peter Mazzeo  
Project Manager  
HNTB  
Pennsylvania

Anne Moore  
Treasurer  
Human Relations Council of Greater West  
Chester  
West Chester, PA

George Wolff  
Founder  
Keystone Transportation Funding  
Coalition  
Palmyra, PA

Richard Kline  
President  
Klitech LLC  
Kennett Square, PA

Stanley Strelish  
Executive director  
LCTA  
Kingston, PA

Angela N. Murray AICP  
Assistant Director, Building & Planning  
Lower Merion Township  
Ardmore, PA

Thomas R. Tulip  
Executive Director  
Mercer County Transit Operations  
Hermitage, PA

Mark Alisesky  
Assistant Vice President  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
Philadelphia, PA

Chris Jandoli  
Supervising Transportation Planner  
Parsons Brinckerhoff  
Philadelphia, PA

Alana Miller  
Pennsylvania Public Interest Research  
Group

Peter Javscas  
Executive Director  
Pennsylvanians for Transportation  
Solutions (PenTrans)  
Philadelphia, PA

Dave Petrucci  
Principal  
Petrucci Consulting, LLC  
Media, PA

Chris Sandvig  
Regional Policy Manager  
Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment  
Group  
Pittsburgh, PA

Michael Veltri  
Manager  
Port Authority of Allegheny County  
Pittsburgh, PA

John Nawn  
Vice President  
PSPE Pennsylvania

Dennis Winters  
Conservation Chair  
Sierra Club - Southeast PA Group  
Philadelphia, PA

Jacquelynn Puriefoy-Brinkley  
Chair  
Southeastern Pennsylvania First Suburbs  
Project  
Lansdowne, PA

Court Gould  
Executive Director  
Sustainable Pittsburgh  
Pittsburgh, PA

Thomas Frawley  
Principal  
Thomas E Frawley Consulting, LLC  
Berwyn, PA

Kevin L. Johnson  
President  
Traffic Planning and Design, Inc.  
Phoenixville, PA

Tanya Seaman  
Principal  
Transformative Consulting  
Philadelphia, PA

Michael Sypolt  
Owner  
TransitGuru Limited  
Pittsburgh, PA

Carol Martsolf  
Legislative Outreach Chair  
WTS Philadelphia  
Philadelphia, PA

#### **RHODE ISLAND**

Bari George  
President  
Bike Newport  
Newport, RI

Susan Marcus  
Board Member  
DOT Watch  
Rhode Island

Jef Nickerson  
President  
Greater City: Providence  
Providence, RI

John Flaherty  
Director of Research & Communications  
Grow Smart Rhode Island  
Providence, RI

Seth Handy  
Principal  
Handy Law LLC  
Providence, RI

Ross Cann, RA  
Chairman  
Newport Architectural Forum  
Newport, RI

Ryan Pierannunzi  
Rhode Island Public Interest Research  
Group (RIPIRG)

Abel Collins  
Program Manager  
Sierra Club Rhode Island

Patricia Hval  
Chair  
Westerly Peak Oil Task Force  
Westerly, RI

#### **SOUTH CAROLINA**

Andrew Meeker  
Urban Designer  
City of Greenville

#### **SOUTH DAKOTA**

Carol Seuret  
Executive Director  
Community Transit, Inc.  
Sisseton, SD

Brenda Paradis  
Palace Transit  
Mitchell, SD

Mark D Klumph Sr  
Executive Director  
People's Transit  
Huron, SD

Winnie Jo Jons  
Transit Director  
ROCS Transit  
Lake Andes, SD

Karen Walton  
General Manager  
Sioux Area Metro  
Sioux Falls, SD

Barb Ballensky  
Transit Director  
Vermillion Public Transit  
Vermillion, SD

Pam Kwasniewski  
Director  
Watertown Area Transit, Inc.  
Watertown, SD

#### **TENNESSEE**

Dylon Walker  
Assistant  
Joplin Management  
Nashville, TN

Liza Joffrion  
Principal  
multiModal Research, LLC  
Nashville, TN

Ralph Schulz  
President and CEO  
Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce  
Nashville, TN

Paul Ballard  
CEO  
Nashville MTA  
Nashville, TN

Lora Baulsir  
General Manager  
Regional Transportation Authority  
Nashville, TN



Debbie Henry  
Executive Director  
The TMA Group-Franklin Transit  
Authority  
Franklin, TN

Ed Cole  
Executive Director  
Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee  
Nashville, TN

Cliff Lippard  
Board President  
Transit Now Nashville  
Nashville, TN

Steven Sondheim  
Coordinator  
Citizens for Transportation Reform  
Memphis, TN

David Kleinfelter  
President  
Walk/Bike Nashville  
Nashville, TN

Ted Cornelius  
Executive Director  
YMCA of Middle Tennessee  
Nashville, TN

## **TEXAS**

Francisco Flores  
Deacon  
Brownsville Diocese  
Mission, TX

David L Turney  
Chairman and CEO  
DRI  
Dallas, TX

David Crossley  
President  
Houston Tomorrow  
Houston, TX

John S. Kulpa, PhD  
Regional Transit Manager  
Jacobs Engineering  
San Antonio, TX

Martha Sanchez  
Coordinator of Organizers  
La Union del Pueblo Entero  
Alton, TX

People Organized in Defense of the Earth  
and her Resources  
Austin, TX

Ann Williams Cass  
Executive Director  
Proyecto Azteca  
San Juan, TX

Kay Warhol  
Steering Committee Chair  
RichmondRail.org  
Houston, TX

Michael Seifert  
Coordinator  
Rio Grande Valley Equal Voice Network  
Texas

Kristen Joyner  
Executive Director  
South West Transit Association  
Fort Worth, TX

Dave Dobbs  
Executive Director  
Texas Association for Public  
Transportation

Melissa Cubria  
TexPIRG Advocate  
Texas Public Interest Research Group

## **UTAH**

Michael Allegra  
General Manager  
Utah Transit Authority  
Salt Lake City, UT

Christian Schlegel  
President  
HCDC LLC  
Park City, Utah

Andrew Gruber  
Executive Director  
Wasatch Front Regional Council  
Salt Lake City, UT

## **VIRGINIA**

The Honorable Mayor Dwight Jones  
City of Richmond  
Richmond, VA

Amy Algarin  
Owner  
A C Services  
Richmond, VA

Gary Dubour  
Director  
Hampton Roads Public Transportation  
Alliance  
Norfolk, VA

Joel Yudken, Ph.D.  
Principal  
High Road Strategies, LLC  
Arlington, VA

Michelle Krockner  
Executive Director  
Northern Virginia Affordable Housing  
Alliance

Rees Shearer  
Chairman  
RAIL Solution  
Emory, VA

Tom Riddell  
Driver/ Manager  
Transportation Centers, Inc.  
Vienna, VA

Lisa Guthrie  
Executive Director  
Virginia League of Conservation Voters  
Richmond, VA

## **VERMONT**

Meredith Birkett  
Acting General Manager  
CCTA  
Burlington, VT

Chapin Spencer  
Executive Director  
Local Motion  
Burlington, VT

Brian Searles  
Secretary of Transportation  
Vermont Agency of Transportation  
Montpelier, VT

Christopher Parker  
Executive Director  
Vermont Rail Action Network  
Vermont-wide, VT

## WASHINGTON

Sarah Lewontin  
Executive Director  
Bellwether Housing  
Seattle, WA

Frank Trosset  
Owner  
Bo Zahn Brewing Company  
Washington

Craig M. Benjamin  
Policy and Government Affairs Manager  
Cascade Bicycle Club  
Seattle, WA

John Hickman  
Vice President  
Catholic Housing Services  
Washington

Victor Colman  
Director  
Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition  
Seattle, WA

Sondra Nielsen  
Director of Consulting Services  
Common Ground  
Seattle, WA

Linda Hugo  
Executive Director  
Community Frameworks  
Bremerton, WA

Todd Morrow  
Chief, Strategic Communications  
Community Transit  
Everett, WA

MJ Kiser  
Program Director  
Compass Housing Alliance  
Seattle, WA

Hilary Franz  
Executive Director  
Futurewise  
Washington

Harry Hoffman  
Executive Director  
Housing Development Consortium of  
Seattle-King County  
Seattle, WA

Marchelle Mertens  
Affordable Housing Associate  
Imagine Housing  
Kirkland, WA

David Leard  
Principal Consultant  
InfraConsult LLC  
Seattle, WA

Kristin Ryan  
Director  
Jonathan Rose Companies  
Seattle, WA

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive  
King County  
Seattle, WA

Matt Sullivan  
Associate  
Mithun, Inc.  
Seattle, WA

Erika Straus-Bowers  
Resident Services Manager  
Mt. Baker Housing Association  
Seattle, WA

Michelle Morlan  
Director  
National Development Council  
Seattle, WA

Paul Bay  
Principal  
Paul N. Bay, P.E., Transportation  
Consultant  
Redmond, WA

Sherwin Lee  
Associate Editor  
Seattle Transit Blog  
Seattle, WA

Joni Earl  
Chief Executive Officers  
Sound Transit  
Seattle, WA

Connie Brown  
Executive Director  
Tacoma Pierce County Affordable  
Housing Consortium  
Tacoma, WA

Andrew Austin  
Field Director  
Transportation Choices  
Seattle, WA

Dan Burden  
Executive Director  
Walkable and Livable Communities  
Institute  
Port Townsend, WA

Elizabeth Rinehart  
Project Manager  
Walsh Constructon Co  
Seattle, WA

Jane Moore  
Executive Director  
Washington Coalition for Promoting  
Physical Activity  
Tacoma, WA

Dulcie Claassen  
Vice President  
Washington Community Reinvestment  
Association  
Seattle, WA

Sasha Rosen  
WashPIRG Organizing Director  
Washington Public Interest Research  
Group

Melinda Giovengo  
Executive Director  
YouthCare  
Seattle, WA

## **WISCONSIN**

Steve Hiniker  
Executive Director  
1000 Friends of Wisconsin  
Madison, WI

Michael H. McCoy  
President  
All Aboard Wisconsin  
Madison, WI

William Sell  
Co-Founder  
Bay View Neighborhood Association  
Milwaukee, WI

Tim J. Sheehan  
Executive Director  
CIL for Western Wisconsin  
Menomonie, WI

Lynn Gilles  
Transit Manager  
Fond du Lac Area Transit  
Fond du Lac, WI

Elizabeth Wessel  
Owner  
Green Concierge Travel LLC  
Madison, WI

Steven Cupery  
UniServ Director  
Lakewood UniServ  
Shorewood, WI

Susan De Vos  
President  
Madison Area Bus Advocates  
Madison, WI

Christopher Spahr  
Planning Associate  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
Madison, WI

Milwaukee Transit Riders Union  
Milwaukee, WI

Joyce Tang Boyland  
Coordinator  
New Urban Friends  
Milwaukee, WI

Jennifer Wenzel  
Secretary  
NFB of Wisconsin  
Janesville, WI

Daniel Mager  
Principal  
Staples Marketing  
Pewaukee, WI

Deborah Wetter  
General Manager  
Valley Transit  
Appleton, WI

Chelsea Reilly  
President  
Wisconsin Association of Blind Students

Jay Timmerman  
Member at large  
Wisconsin Association of Rail Passengers  
Middleton, WI

Robert Fisher  
Secretary  
Wisconsin Association of Railroad  
Passengers  
La Crosse, WI

Sarah Baebler  
Vice President  
Wisconsin Parents of Blind Children  
Janesville, WI

Kyle Bailey  
Program Associate  
WISPIRG  
Madison, WI

## **WEST VIRGINIA**

The Honorable Mayor John Manchester  
City of Lewisburg, West Virginia  
Lewisburg, WV

John David  
Executive Director  
Southern Appalachian Labor School  
Oak Hill, WV

Gary Zuckett  
Executive Director  
WV Citizen Action Group  
Charleston, WV

## **WYOMING**

Josh Jones  
Traffic Engineer  
Wyoming Local Technical Assistance  
Program  
Laramie, WY