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## **All Aboard Ohio Joins Effort to Encourage Governor and Legislative Leaders to Focus on Accessible, Affordable, and Sustainable Public Transit Options**

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For Immediate Release

Led by All Aboard Ohio, today a diverse group of advocates delivered a message to Governor John Kasich, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Ohio General Assembly. The Ohio Coalition for Transportation Equity is made up of more than 40 different stakeholders representing various populations from urban, suburban and rural communities who want to work with Ohio leaders to invest in accessible, affordable and sustainable public transit options.

In addition to All Aboard Ohio, the only statewide citizens-based rail and transit advocacy organization, the coalition's members include representatives from a wide array of interests and backgrounds, including people with disabilities, older adults, environmental groups, bicycling organizations, human service providers, transit agencies, business concerns and faith leaders.

The [coalition's letter](#) announces the group's request to work with the administration to improve Ohio's public transit system, and details the positive impact that greater investment in public transit will likely have on Ohio's economy, environment and communities. The coalition's letter cites [ODOT's 2015 Transit Needs study](#), which states that ODOT needs \$192.4 million in capital and \$96.7 million in operating funds just to meet existing demand for public transportation services. An additional \$273.5 million in one-time funding is also needed to address system backlog and bring Ohio's accessible transit fleet to a state of good repair.

“Accessible, affordable and sustainable transportation is essential for connecting Ohioans to jobs, education, shopping, health care, and other community assets to be more productive citizens,” said Ken Prendergast, executive director of All Aboard Ohio. “Ohio's rail and transit users are ready to be a part of the transportation policy conversation, and All Aboard Ohio is pleased to work with such a diverse coalition to ensure that their voices are heard.”

According to the [Federal Reserve Bank](#), only one in four jobs in Ohio's metro areas can be reached within a 90-minute transit trip. The [Brookings Institute](#) says this situation is even more serious in smaller Ohio cities because their scant public transportation offerings are less capable of linking jobs and job-seekers. The result is that Ohio has a large labor pool that is under-employed and therefore isn't fully participating in Ohio's economy. In turn, that means a bigger drain on public assistance programs and tax dollars while making Ohio labor markets more expensive. Public transportation or public assistance? That will be Ohio's choice in 2017.

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