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We must keep transit in the segregated transportation fund! We must restore the cut made to public transit state operating assistance.

As members of the faith community we want to unite our communities and our people to overcome isolation, poverty and intolerance. Transit systems keep the community moving by helping Wisconsin residents – seniors, people with disabilities and those with limited income – to live more self-sufficient lives. Transit helps those in our community to get to work, medical appointments, stores, and remain connected to friends and family. We are troubled by how the current state budget puts at risk the needed funding to keep our community moving and growing.

Transit is an integrated part of the transportation system and must remain in the segregated Transportation Fund! Removing transit funding from the Transportation Fund and moving it to the General Fund makes our transit system funding vulnerable. The motives of this move are brought into question considering the upcoming vote in 2015 to amend the state constitution to protect this fund from shifts to the general fund, just after transit is proposed to move to the general fund.

We must stop the effort to remove transit operating assistance and paratransit services from the designated Transportation fund. To think that transit systems and paratransit are not “transportation” is absurd! The proposed state budget sends a clear message to transit users, that they do not matter and that their mobility is not a priority for Wisconsin.

Strong public transit systems create stronger communities.

Jobs – Workers and businesses benefit when they can depend on a reliable transit system to get people to work.

Businesses – Transit links communities and draw a talented workforce and build local economies, helping Wisconsin attract businesses and jobs.

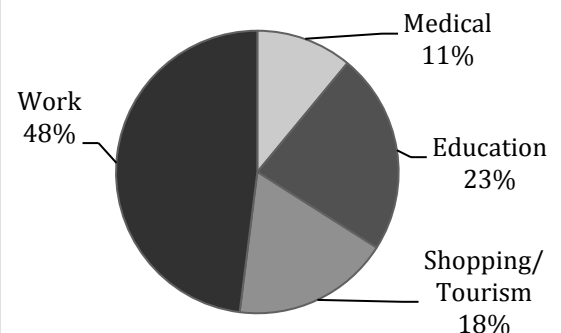
Education – Students get to school, people are connected to skills training, and higher education students get to class, jobs, shopping, and community.

Healthcare – People get to medical appointments, they prevent more serious conditions and emergency trips. Public health costs go down.

Community – Individuals can maximize their independence when they can access services, shopping and social opportunities.

Statewide Transit Rides By Purpose

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Study



Restore the \$11.8 million (\$23.6 million for the biennium) cut to state transit aids in the 2013-15

Biennial State Budget. “Without additional transit funding, unless local governments can increase their funding share: Routes will be cut and fares will increase; aging buses and bus facilities will become unsafe or go out of service; and the state’s transit-dependent population will be isolated in their homes, with people unable to get to jobs or school.” -*Wisconsin Transportation Finance and Policy Commission*

Public transit service in Wisconsin has been significantly reduced over the last decade. Without a change, would be expected to continue its downward path, and in some cases, possibly even be eliminated. Cuts in state transit aids in the last biennial budget were very harmful to Wisconsin’s public transit infrastructure and the citizens and businesses in the 81 communities and 72 counties in Wisconsin that they serve.

Last year, 48% of trips taken on services were for employment purposes (including paratransit service). With gas prices hovering at record levels and funding for road building set to increase, we call for a balance of transit funding in the state budget so that Wisconsin workers can get to their jobs. Wisconsin residents need more options, not fewer.

We must have a budget that expands, not limits this effectiveness. Restore the cut to transit assistance and keep transit funding where it should be, in the designated Transportation Fund.

We Must Strengthen Our Transit Infrastructure In Wisconsin

48%

Percentage of all transit rides that connect people to jobs in Wisconsin.

44.4%

Percentage of state funding for transit operating assistance in 1999. We are now at a historic low of 32.9%.

27%

Percentage of residents in 17 counties that will be 65 or older by 2025. Transit allows seniors to access medical care, shopping, and family.

23%

The drop in amount of driving done between 2001 and 2009. More people are opting for transit.

\$870.5 million

Revenue generated in the Wisconsin economy in 2004 from a \$252 million investment in transit.
