



Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative

Alameda County | City of Berkeley | Contra Costa County | Marin County | Napa County | City and County of San Francisco | San Mateo County | Santa Clara County | Santa Cruz County | Solano County | Sonoma County

April 20, 2020

Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: Agenda Item 7 (f): Emergency FTA Transit Operating Support in the Federal CARES Act

Dear Board Chair Haggerty and Commissioners:

The Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII) is the coalition of the San Francisco Bay Area's eleven public health departments committed to advancing health equity.

We encourage the Commission to consider the creation of a **COVID-19 Response Fund** with a portion of revenue provided through the Federal CARES Act. Eligible uses could include personal protective equipment for transit workers and riders, cleaning materials, investments to meet the safety and accessibility needs of vulnerable populations such as those with disabilities, health education materials, and hazard pay for front-line workers.

Creating a consolidated response fund allows MTC to direct resources to meet the most pressing public health needs across the region's many transit systems. It also allows MTC to elevate best practices for addressing public health in relation to COVID-19, especially for those who face systemic barriers to health.

We stand ready to assist MTC in crafting a systemic response to COVID-19 that advances health for all the Bay Area's communities. Establishing a COVID-19 Response Fund from the Federal CARES Act Transit disbursement could be a foundational element of such a response. It could also be a critical element to ensure that Bay Area residents maintain their faith in our region's diverse transit systems in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

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