

HANDOUT - Email Correspondence
Commission Agenda Item 7f

From: [Liz Ortega](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: Covid Funding- Alameda Labor Council Statement
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 2:04:23 PM

External Email

My name is Liz Ortega-Toro, Executive Secretary-Treasurer representing the Alameda Labor Council serving 135,000 union members in Alameda County.

Transit workers are on the frontlines of COVID 19 and provide an essential service to some of our most vulnerable populations. That's why we are asking MTC use just 5% of the first distribution of \$1.3b in CARES Act funding to create a COVID-19 Response Fund. The key point is to distribute this funding based on need, not a formula that ignores the reality of the pandemic. The vast majority of the funds would go to transit agencies to keep workers on the payroll and keep service running. But this small sliver of 5% would make sure we're responding to the public health crisis directly.

Thank you,
Liz Ortega-Toro
Executive Secretary-Treasurer

--

Elizabeth Ortega-Toro
Executive Secretary-Treasurer
Alameda Labor Council
www.alamedalabor.org



From: [ywilliams](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: ITEM 7(f) Transit Operating Support in the Federal CARES Act
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 4:58:59 PM

External Email

Mr. Haggerty, Chair

My name is Yvonne M. Williams, President/Business Agent of the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 192.

On behalf of our union member, the public we serve and, your constituents. I write to support the creation of a COVID-19 Response Fund.

To include:

PPE for all transit workers

Mask for every rider who needs one

State-of-the-art disinfecting for all transit vehicles

Hazard Pay for transit workers

Recovery of fares

Meeting the needs of vulnerable populations

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

From: [Andrea Mullarkey](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: MTC meeting 4/22 - public comment
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 10:16:32 AM

External Email

Good morning,

I write to you as a transit rider and as a union member (SEIU) that supports the rights of workers. As you consider how to spend the federal emergency transit funds I urge you to put 5% into a Covid-19 Response fund to protect the safety and lives of transit workers, the essential workers in other sectors who rely on transit to get to their essential work, and all people who depend on transit to get to the essential activities of their lives during Covid-19. I represent city workers who need transit to get to the homeless shelters where they do disaster service response, to the testing sites that they staff and to all the places where essential frontline services are delivered. They need transit that is safe, not just for themselves but for the communities they serve. Take 5% of these funds for PPE for drivers and riders, for sanitizing buses and the like. And use the other 95% to keep transit workers employed with full pay and benefits.

These transit workers keep our essential workers moving all across the Bay. Please provide the means for them to do it safely so riders and drivers can keep rolling together!

Andrea Mullarkey

Kimberly Ward

From: bonnie@bonnielockhart.com
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 3:37 PM
To: MTC Info
Subject: MTC Commission Meeting 4/22 public comment

External Email

To the MTC Board of Directors,

I am writing to urge you to support ATU and all transit workers who ask that fully **5% of the of the first distribution of \$1.3b in CARES Act funding is used to create a COVID-19 Response Fund.**

Distribution of CARES funds must respond to current need, based on COVID pandemic conditions. While nearly all of the funds will and should go to transit agencies to insure workers stay on payroll and riders continue to have transit service, this 5% for public health protection is vital to the lives of both workers and riders.

Responding to the COVID crisis, the number one issue is saving lives. Over 80 transit workers have died nation-wide and thousands have been infected. Here in the Bay Area, our essential workers and the riders who depend on them, essential workers themselves, need the protections a COVID-19 Response Fund will create.

CARES Act Funds are a response to this pandemic. The primary purpose of this fund is stated in the FTA guidelines: the CARES Act provides funds to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. Nothing is more vital in that response than the protection of lives, and the lives of transit workers and lives of the essential workers they serve are most immediately threatened in this crisis.

The MTC, with administrative power to distribute CARES funds, can make a great difference in the health and well-being of both transit workers and their riders by insuring that 5% of these funds go directly to the COVID-19 Response Fund. There is no other agency or funding source that can accomplish this vital task. Please use your authority wisely. Create this COVID-19 Response Fund and protect transit workers, and our entire community as well.

Thank you,
Bonnie Lockhart
Environmental Activist
Oakland Resident and Senior

From: [Claudine Tong](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 12:03:09 PM

External Email

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

Our goals during and after this pandemic must be (a) to provide essential workers and transit-dependent riders with safe transit service to access essential workplaces and services, and to save the lives of transit workers and riders alike, and (b) to ensure that all transit workers continue to receive full pay and benefits despite reduced service levels. To do so, and to faithfully implement staff's own principle, 5% of the funds should be distributed to a COVID-19 Response Fund, and the remainder should be distributed to transit agencies in proportion to each agency's share of either labor costs or "of the total budgeted FY 2019-20 operating costs for systems across the Bay Area" (i.e., staff's first proposed factor).

The details and rationale for our proposed distribution are as follows: 1. Create a COVID-19 Response Fund with 5% of Phase 1 Federal Revenues. This fund will be made available to every agency based on its actual need for funding to address the health and safety issues facing transit workers and riders during the pandemic and its aftermath. As FTA notes, this was the purpose of the emergency funding. Our entire region is counting on MTC to deploy these emergency resources in a way that flattens the curve and saves the lives of our courageous frontline workers, and the millions who depend on them. Eligible uses of the Bay Area COVID-19 Response Fund should include: a. PPE for all transit workers, including masks, gloves, disinfecting wipes, and hand sanitizer; and plexiglass dividers on vehicles to protect transit drivers b. Masks for every rider who needs one, to protect riders and drivers, and the larger community c. Disinfecting all transit vehicles to state-of-the-art standards of virus protection (including hiring new workers, training them in state-of-the-art sanitizing methods, and outfitting them with hazard suits, N95 masks, gloves, and goggles) d. Hazard pay for our heroic transit workers e. Recovery of fares foregone due to rear-door boarding f. Meeting the specific needs of especially vulnerable populations, including people with disabilities, seniors and paratransit

riders If any money remains in this Fund after all needs are met, it can be reallocated as part of Phase 2. If there is a shortfall, it can be augmented as part of that second Phase. 2. Distribute the remaining funding on the basis of total operating budgets or labor cost, not farebox. The bulk of the funds should be distributed solely on the basis of each agency's operating or labor costs, without consideration of pre-COVID farebox recovery. There are two reasons: Keep our transit workers on the payroll: Operating budgets or labor costs are the best indicator of the actual cost for each agency to keep its workers on the payroll over the coming months. The jobs and benefits of our courageous transit workers must be protected during this crisis, and funds should be distributed in proportion to that specific need. This will also support the system's eventual recovery by ensuring sufficient staff is still on payroll. Equity: Distribution based on farebox recovery disproportionately benefits high-fare systems, at the expense of low-fare systems that carry disproportionate numbers of riders of color, transit-dependent riders, and essential workers. (In some cases, high-fare systems that previously carried the highest number of riders now carry fewer riders than low-fare systems.)

3. If MTC withholds 1% for "regional transit programs," those funds should be prioritized for pandemic assistance This is not the time for MTC to take nearly \$8 million off the top of the distribution with no pandemic-related specifics for its use. MTC must be transparent in its use of these funds and accountable to spending them to meet needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. MTC should focus its resources on providing free inter-system transfers, and identifying and filling gaps in lifeline transit service needed to provide essential workers and transit-dependent riders with access to critical destinations (e.g., hospitals, social services, grocery stores, etc). In this historic crisis, the leadership of our regional transportation agency will literally spell the difference between life and death for workers and residents across the Bay Area. We urge you to take this opportunity to direct 5% of these emergency transit funds to address the crisis, especially at a time when local government resources are stretched so thin.

Claudine Tong
Oakland, CA 94601

"Justice is what love looks like in public" - Dr. Cornel West

From: [David Sorrell](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: Public comment – 4/22 Metropolitan Transportation Commission meeting.
Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 5:58:11 PM

External Email

Good evening MTC Board Members,
I would like to call attention to this Wednesday's upcoming Board Meeting, where the MTC is poised to distribute the CARES funding (to the tune of \$1.3 Billion) to the transit agencies who are in dire need.

Because of the monies dispersed is a proactive approach to triage operating losses under normal circumstance, agencies regionally and nationwide are faced with some critical decisions: at a crossroads of being change agents with the need to make a difference, is it wise to think about how those funds would be used but improve transit connectivity and agency coordination (wholesale). We should be cognizant about making this crisis, and recovery, important to improve customer satisfaction and coordination regardless of us being in "survival mode."

Since transit agencies currently aren't well coordinated with each of the agencies providing a succinct coordination plan, and judging from piecemeal changes that the agencies have performed, I ask you, the MTC, to please evaluate and request improvements with the \$1.3 Billion be made to proactively improve regional transit, and not just triage existing service.

As Seamless Bay Area's policy director Ian Griffiths [outlined last week on the Seamless Bay Area blog](#), MTC should pair these emergency funds with five proactive steps designed to rebuild our region's transit ridership and restore confidence as we emerge from this crisis:

- Develop a region-wide core transit network plan within 30 days
- Eliminate transfer fees and charge riders only one fare
- Eliminate restrictions that prevent transit agencies from transporting passengers in other service areas
- Make transit free for children 12 years of age and under

- Develop regionally consistent emergency safety standards for workers and riders

Right now, the MTC has a once-in-a-generation chance to connect emergency transit funding to basic rules like these that require operators to provide unified, customer-focused service.

Without a proactive strategy to rebuild ridership in the coming weeks and months, Bay Area transit will continue on a downward spiral of low revenues, inhibiting our economic recovery, punishing riders with the least means, reinforcing our car dependence, and leaving our society vulnerable to future emergencies.

For these reasons, please make a conscientious effort to transform and improve our public transit network.

Thank you and please stay safe!

Dave Sorrell

TDM Manager, [UC Berkeley](#) | Principal, DaveSquare | [Linkedin](#) | Phone: (510) 545-3390 | DaveSquare24@gmail.com
Board Member, Advocacy and Policy, [Seamless Bay Area](#)
At-Large Director, [Association for Commuter Transportation - Northern California Chapter](#)

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From: [Mary L-L](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: Genesis: Public Comment to MTC 4/22/20 Item 7F the CARES act
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 1:45:27 PM
Attachments: [Letter to MTC re emergency FTA funds 4-20-20.pdf](#)

External Email

Public Comment for Item 7F

Commissioners:

Because of our belief that the Emergency Funds should be used to protect the health/safety of drivers/operators/cleaning staff and riders, Genesis has signed onto the attached letter-- Here is our request:

1.
Create a COVID-19 Fund with 5% of Phase 1 Federal Revenues. This fund will be made available to based on the need of each transit agency for funds to address the pandemic and its aftermath, including:
 - a.
PPE for transit workers, including plexiglass dividers to protect transit drivers
 - b.
Masks for every rider who needs one
 - c.
Disinfecting all transit vehicles to state-of-the-art standards of virus protection (including hiring new workers, training and outfitting them, etc.)
 - d.
Hazard pay for our heroic transit workers
 - e.
Recovery of fares foregone due to rear-door boarding
 - f.
(Any remaining funds can be reallocated in Phase 2.)
2.
Distribution of funds with equity in mind: Distribute the remaining funding on the basis of total operating budgets, not farebox.
 - a.
Equity: high-fare systems ...
 - b.
Keep paying our transit workers ...

3.

MTC allocation of \$7.8 Million: If MTC withholds 1% for “regional transit programs,” those funds should be prioritized for pandemic assistance, including free inter-system transfers, and ensuring a regional Lifeline network that provides access to essential destinations for essential workers and transit-dependent riders.

--

Mary Lim-Lampe

Executive Director

Genesis: A Regional Interfaith Community Organization in the Bay Area

Gamaliel of California

From: Pickett, Raymond
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 1:58 PM
To: MTC Info
Subject: MTC Emergency Funds

External Email

Commissioners:

Because of our belief that the Emergency Funds should be used to protect the health/safety of drivers/operators/cleaning staff and riders, Genesis has signed onto the attached letter--Here is our request:

Create a COVID-19 Fund with 5% of Phase 1 Federal Revenues. This fund will be made available to based on the need of each transit agency for funds to address the pandemic and its aftermath, including:

- PPE for transit workers, including plexiglass dividers to protect transit drivers
- Masks for every rider who needs one
- Disinfecting all transit vehicles to state-of-the-art standards of virus protection (including hiring new workers, training and outfitting them, etc.)
- Hazard pay for our heroic transit workers
- Recovery of fares foregone due to rear-door boarding
- (Any remaining funds can be reallocated in Phase 2.)
- Distribution of funds with equity in mind: Distribute the remaining funding on the basis of total operating budgets, not farebox.
- Equity: high-fare systems
- Keep paying our transit workers
- MTC allocation of \$7.8

If MTC withholds 1% for "regional transit programs," those funds should be prioritized for pandemic assistance, including free inter-system transfers, and ensuring a regional Lifeline network that provides access to essential destinations for essential workers and transit-dependent riders.

Thank you.

Raymond Pickett

Raymond Pickett, Ph.D. (he, him, his)

Rector



Pacific Lutheran
Theological Seminary

From: [Joyce Willis](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: Saving Lives
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 4:59:22 PM

External Email

Respectfully, I am asking the MTC to set aside 5% of the \$1.5 billion of the CARES Act funding to create a COVID-19 Response Fund to be available to every transit agency for their PPE needs. Let's save lives!

Joyce Willis
ATU Local 192

[Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [M. Parker](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: MTC Agenda Item 7(f)
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 2:50:02 PM

External Email

To members of the MTC Board

I want to add my support for the call to use 5% of the federal emergency funds for a COVID Response fund to protect transit and other essential workers. It should go without saying that your first responsibility is to assure that people who must work during this pandemic have the essential PPE and conditions to do the job as safely as possible. Even with the proper safeguards, the work is still dangerous and stressful.

I also want to urge that the funds be distributed according to payroll and not fares collected. The pandemic is already disproportionately hurting low income residents. Certainly programs to fix the problems should not make the inequities worse.

Thank you

Michael Parker

From: [Monica Mallon](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: MTC Commission Meeting 4/22 public comment
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 4:51:36 PM

External Email

Dear MTC Commissioners,

My name is Monica Mallon, and I am a student at San Jose State and a resident of Santa Clara County. I want to encourage MTC to give clear direction to transit agencies to only use the CARES Act funds for operations, PPE, cleaning, and other expenses related to the health emergency.

I also support the creation of a COVID-19 Response Fund with 5% of the Phase 1 funds. This fund should be available to every agency based on need. Uses for the fund should include:

- A. PPE for all transit workers, including masks, gloves, disinfecting wipes, and hand sanitizer; and plexiglass dividers on vehicles to protect transit drivers
- B. Masks for every rider who needs one, to protect riders and drivers, and the larger community
- C. Disinfecting all transit vehicles to state-of-the-art standards of virus protection (including hiring new workers, training them in state-of-the-art sanitizing methods, and outfitting them with hazard suits, N95 masks, gloves, and goggles)
- D. Hazard pay for our heroic transit workers
- E. Recovery of fares foregone due to rear-door boarding
- F. Meeting the specific needs of especially vulnerable populations, including people with disabilities, seniors and paratransit riders.

The decisions that you will make tomorrow and over the next few months will determine the future of transit in the Bay Area. As a life-long transit rider and young person, I urge you to think about how these decisions will impact our future.

Best,

--

Monica Mallon

From: [Richard Marcantonio](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Cc: district1@acgov.org; [Therese W. McMillan](#); [Alix Bockelman](#)
Subject: Agenda item 7(f) -- Create a COVID-19 Response Fund
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 4:43:13 PM

External Email

Chair Haggerty and Commissioners:

Public Advocates joined with transit workers and their unions, members of the 6 Wins Network, the Alameda Labor Council, and many others to request a modest but crucial change to the staff recommendation for the distribution of federal CARES Act emergency transit funds.

We are asking you to create, with just 5 percent of the funding, a Bay Area COVID-19 Response Fund.

In the midst of this unprecedented pandemic, our number one priority must be saving lives.

That includes the lives of our courageous transit workers. It also includes the lives of thousands of frontline workers, like nurses and grocery clerks, who continue to ride transit to provide our region with life-sustaining and life-saving services. All of these essential workers are putting their lives, and the lives of their families, at risk daily to serve the millions of other Bay Area residents who shelter in place.

And it includes the many transit-dependent riders -- of which a large proportion are riders of color with disproportionately high infection and death rates -- who continue to ride transit to access those essential services.

Setting aside a small fraction of emergency FTA funds to create a COVID-19 Response Fund provides exactly what we need, right when we need it. It will ensure that all transit workers have the personal protective equipment (PPE) they need; that every rider who needs a face mask has one, that transit agencies are reimbursed for the cost of protective measures like rear-door boarding, and that they can pay their heroic workers the hazard pay they deserve.

Why not just let each agency use some of its own allocation for these purposes? There are several reasons: First, each agency's need for pandemic response measures will be different. In particular, smaller agencies' needs may be larger, on a percentage basis, than those of larger agencies. Second, creating a stand-alone fund that is distributed based on need will incentive every agency to provide the highest level of protection for workers and riders. It will remove any perverse incentives an agency might have to use funds for long-term goals at the expense of meeting the immediate crisis. Finally, by creating this fund, MTC will demonstrate to the entire region that you are bring to this crisis the serious and immediate leadership that is needed.

As local revenues from every source dry up, the infusion of over \$1 billion in federal transit funds through MTC gives our regional agency the chance to lead the way to a safe and

healthy Bay Area. Please take full advantage of that opportunity.

Richard Marcantonio
Public Advocates Inc.

rmarcantonio@publicadvocates.org

From: [Emily Wheeler](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Cc: [Richard Marcantonio](#)
Subject: Metropolitan Transportation Commission Meeting Agenda Item 7f.
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 2:49:26 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image002.jpg](#)
[image003.jpg](#)

External Email

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

I am an employee at Public Advocates and a proud lifelong AC Transit rider and I am writing to urge you to allocate just 5% of the first distribution of the \$1.3 billion in CARES Act funding to create a COVID-19 response fund, to be made available to every transit agency based on its actual need for PPE for all transit workers (including masks, gloves, disinfecting wipes, and hand sanitizer as well as plexiglass dividers on vehicles to protect drivers); masks for every rider who needs one; disinfecting all transit vehicles (including hiring of new workers to do so); hazard pay for our heroic transit workers; recovery of fares that have been lost due to rear-door boarding; and meeting the specific needs of especially vulnerable populations (including people with disabilities, seniors, and paratransit riders).

Right now, AC Transit's ridership has surpassed that of BART, and AC Transit has eliminated fares in order to protect their drivers. As such, MTC should **distribute funding based on need**, not an outdated formula that ignores the realities of our current situation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Emily Wheeler

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSOCIATE
131 Steuart Street | Suite 300 | San Francisco, CA 94105
415 431 7430 ewheeler@publicadvocates.org
Gender pronouns: She / Her / Hers
www.publicadvocates.org



From: [Vinita Goyal](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: MTC Meeting-April 22nd, Agenda item 7f--Discussion of federal stimulus funds.
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 2:57:44 PM

External Email

Hello,

My name is Vinita Goyal, I am the Program Officer for Housing and Transportation at Silicon Valley Community Foundation SVCF and a transit rider.

SVCF has five strategic programmatic areas and housing and transportation is one of them. We have pivoted in our response to COVID-19 and are engaging in both short term recovery efforts and mobilizing resources toward long term rebuilding.

We applaud that MTC is supporting our transportation agencies with operating dollars, this is essential as it will allow the agencies to recoup some of the losses from fares and other revenues that they have experienced during the pandemic.

We strongly urge MTC to consider three additional priorities.

First, our transportation infrastructure serves as a backbone for essential workers, transportation workers and other transit dependent communities. During the time of COVID-19, these riders and workers — disproportionately people of color — will face disproportionate rates of infection and death if not protected. So we urge MTC to mandate a budget of safety measures included as part of the expenditure in transportation agencies. During the immediate crisis of the pandemic, not all transit vehicles are being sanitized to state-of-the-art levels, as recommended in guidance from the CDC. While other safety measures are being addressed, including provision of PPE and social distancing through rear-door boarding, the failure to clean vehicles to COVID-19 standards puts riders and essential workers — including transit operators themselves — at serious risk of illness and death.

Second, in your allocation of stimulus funds, please ensure that high fare systems do not inadvertently receive disproportionately higher funds at the expense of low-fare systems that carry disproportionate numbers of riders of color, transit-dependent riders, and essential workers.

Thirdly, this scarcity of resources forces us to think about how to optimize our systems so that they provide the greatest need and yet are critical in our long term recovery. We urge MTC to envision and plan and place a minimum infrastructure that can be scaled up in the future.

Thanks for considering these suggestions.

Vinita Goyal.

Vinita Goyal

Housing and Transportation Program Officer

Silicon Valley Community Foundation

Main: 650.450.5400 | Direct: 650.429.3036 | vgoyal@siliconvalleycf.org

siliconvalleycf.org | [twitter](#) | [facebook](#)

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Join our Regional Response to COVID-19

Help SVCF and partner organizations assist those affected by coronavirus.

[Donate to protect public health>>](#)

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From: [Eugene Bradley](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Cc: [Dave Cortese](#); mayoremail@sanjoseca.gov; [Jeannie Bruins](#)
Subject: Re: MTC Action Item 7(f)-Emergency FTA Transit Ops Support in Fed. CARES Act
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 3:50:55 PM
Attachments: [Letter to MTC re emergency FTA funds 4-20-20.pdf](#)

External Email

Dear Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Commissioners & Staff:

Please ensure that you reserve 5% of the initial distribution \$1.3 billion you are receiving in Federal CARES Act funding at your meeting on April 22.

That 5% must be used to help save the lives of transit workers in the Bay Area. Nationwide, more than 80 transit workers have already died due to COVID-19. In this global pandemic, the top priority: saving lives. Guidance from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) begins by stating: "the CARES Act provides funds to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19..."

Such a reserve - which must be put in a COVID-19 Response Fund - can be used to buy masks, ventilators, and other equipment needed to disinfect and protect workers. In addition, it can be used to provide masks to transit riders who need them. This ensures everyone is properly protected during this global pandemic. Funding must be distributed to ALL Bay Area transit agencies based on need, not formulas. Response to a global pandemic cannot be resolved by simply a formula.

I am endorsing a letter that TransForm of Oakland, on behalf of other organizations, sent to you earlier regarding this request. That letter is attached, for the record.

Government at all local levels is being squeezed more than ever. It is time for the MTC to step up its role and be the leader needed to protect transit, its workers, and riders during this global pandemic. Your written response to this request is appreciated.

Eugene Bradley

Founder, Silicon Valley Transit Users

<http://www.svtransitusers.org/>

From: [Susan Schacher](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: Urge creation of a COVID-19 Response Fund
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 4:03:44 PM

External Email

To MTC Commission:

I am writing to urge the creation of a COVID-19 Response Fund using 5% of the of the first distribution of \$1.3B in CARES Act funding. Such a fund is needed to insure workers stay on payroll and riders continue to have transit service. This 5% for public health protection is vital to the lives of both workers and riders.

Sincerely,
Susan Schacher
Oakland
BART and AC Transit rider

From: [Ted Franklin](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: MTC Commission Meeting 4/22/2020 public comment
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 4:44:24 PM

External Email

To the MTC Board of Directors,

Please support the Amalgamated Transit Union and all transit workers who ask that fully **5% of the of the first distribution of \$1.3b in CARES Act funding be dedicated to a COVID-19 Response Fund.**

CARES funds must be used to respond to current need. While nearly all of the funds will and should go to transit agencies to ensure workers remain on pay status and riders continue to have transit service, **commitment of 5% for public health protection is vital to the lives of both workers and riders.**

Responding to the COVID crisis, the number one issue is saving lives. We know already that 80 transit workers have died nation-wide and thousands have been infected. These numbers may well turn out to be a gross underestimate of the impact of the virus on transit workers. Here in the Bay Area, our essential workers and the riders who depend on them, essential workers themselves, need the protections a COVID-19 Response Fund will create.

The MTC has the power to allocate CARES funds to meet the most urgent needs of the community. Please use your authority wisely. Create the COVID-19 Response Fund and protect transit workers, and our entire community as well.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ted Franklin

Coordinator

System Change Not Climate Change

From: [Bob Allen](#)
To: [MTC Info](#)
Subject: Agenda item 7(f) -- Create a COVID-19 Response Fund
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 5:00:33 PM

External Email

Chair Haggerty and Commissioners:

Urban Habitat has joined with Bay Area transit workers and their unions, members of the 6 Wins Network, the Alameda Labor Council, and allied community organizations and advocates to request a modest but crucial change to the staff recommendation for the distribution of federal CARES Act emergency transit funds.

We are asking you to create, with just 5 percent of the funding, a Bay Area COVID-19 Response Fund.

In the midst of this unprecedented pandemic, our number one priority must be protecting the lives, health, and safety of Bay Area essential workers and residents.

That includes the lives of our courageous frontline workers including transit workers, nurses and grocery clerks, who continue to ride transit to provide our region's most basic needs. All of these essential workers are putting their lives, and the lives of their families, at risk daily to serve the millions of other Bay Area residents who shelter in place.

And it includes the many transit-dependent riders -- of which a large proportion are riders of color with disproportionately high infection and death rates -- who continue to ride transit to access those essential services.

Setting aside a small fraction of emergency FTA funds to create a COVID-19 Response Fund provides exactly what we need, right when we need it. It will ensure that all transit workers have the personal protective equipment (PPE) they need; that every rider who needs a facemask has one, that transit agencies are reimbursed for the cost of protective measures like rear-door boarding, and that they can pay their heroic workers the hazard pay they deserve.

We believe this need is too important to be left to individual transit agencies to budget for. We know that each agency's need for pandemic response measures will be different. Creating a stand-alone fund that is distributed based on need will incentive every agency to provide the highest level of protection for workers and riders. It will prioritize the most immediate needs and deter the use of these funds for long-term goals. By creating this fund, MTC will demonstrate to the entire region that you are providing the leadership this crisis demands.

Thank you,

Bob Allen
Policy & Advocacy Campaign Director

Urban Habitat

Bob Allen (he/him/his)
Policy and Advocacy Campaign Director
Urban Habitat
2000 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA 94612
510-839-9510 ext.314
<http://urbanhabitat.org/>

Read our reports, [Driving Deeper into the Climate Crisis: Who Gets Priority on Our Streets?](#) and [Rooted in Home: Community-Based Alternatives to the Bay Area Housing Crisis](#).

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