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United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County

Empowering Seniors ♦ Enriching Youth ♦ Enhancing Community

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July 7, 2020

Dear Chair Josefowitz, Vice Chair Dutra-Vernaci, and fellow MTC Programming and Allocations Committee members.

My name is Chonita Chew. I am the Travel Trainer with the United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County (USOAC). I would like to address item **4B** on your agenda for the July 8th MTC Programming and Allocations Committee meeting. USOAC represents seniors throughout the county of Alameda. Many of our seniors traditionally relied on AC Transit service to get around the county to senior centers, doctor appointments, leisure and much more. Currently, the service has been the backbone of transit and critical for essential worker travel during this pandemic.

We know that the current pandemic has drastically impacted businesses across the economy, including transit agencies. AC Transit has taken a tremendous financial hit due to foregoing fare collection and social distancing which helps to keep the passengers and operators safe during the pandemic. They may likely continue to suffer financially due to reduced sales tax revenues as well.

We recognize that all of our public transit agencies have been impacted by the current pandemic and our fear is that AC Transit may have to reduce its service even more due to shrinking revenues. Given the current economic climate, the proposed \$33.8 million that is being proposed for MTC to allocate to AC Transit will provide a lifeline for the transit agency during these difficult times and mitigate the need to reduce service for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, this allocation will help to sustain and stabilize service levels that so many of our chamber and community members and patrons rely on to keep our local economy going as we move through the pandemic.

AC Transit provides service to those in our community with the highest needs and who truly depend on their service. 74% of their riders have incomes of less than \$50,000, 75% are people of color, 43% don't have access to a car. These funds will allow them to continue serving them.

I fully support the allocation to AC Transit. Please provide this necessary funding to AC Transit so that our residents are not left stranded. Thank you so much for your consideration.

Kindest regards,

Chonita Chew, Travel Trainer & Community Organizer