
From: Haleema Bharoocha
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External Email

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

My name Haleema Bharoocha. I am the Advocacy Manager for Alliance for Girls. I'm here to speak to item 4B on your agenda. Our young people rely heavily on AC Transit services to ensure that they get to school and work every day. In particular, girls and gender expansive youth rely on public transportation as a means of accessing resources in their community. It is critical for these services to continue being offered and that these services have a gender equity lens to ensure the safety and access of riders who are girls and gender expansive youth.

We know that the current pandemic has drastically impacted business' across the economy, including transit agencies. AC Transit and other transit agencies have taken a tremendous financial hit due to foregoing fare collection and will likely continue to suffer financially due to reduced sales tax revenues. The proposed \$33.8 million that is being proposed for MTC to allocate to AC Transit will provide a lifeline to the service that will help sustain the service for the foreseeable future. This will help to preserve the level of service that so many of our families and our rely on to keep our local economy going. If AC Transit does not receive this funding, we fear that it will have to reduce its service levels, and our local business community that is already struggling will find itself in even more dire straits. These funds are critical to keep service running. 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

In addition, Alliance for Girls, youth researchers have launched a COVID-19 Rapid Response research initiative in March 2020. As of today, 353 girls and gender expansive youth up to age 24 in CA responded, many are in Alameda County. About 12% of girls and gender expansive youth shared that they need or do not have access to public transportation during COVID-19. These funds will allow AC Transit to continue serving the most marginalized in our community and ensure that our youth have access to resources, jobs, etc in their community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

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Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

**"Girls" refers to gender-expansive youth (cis girls, trans girls, non-binary youth, gender non-conforming youth, gender queer youth and any girl-identified youth).*

Help us understand the needs of girls during the COVID-19 crisis. [Share](#) this [survey](#) with girls up to age 24 in California.

Tell us how COVID-19 is impacting you! If you provide programs/services to girls, please [take 3 minutes to share how COVID-19 is impacting you and your youth](#). Your insights will inform our advocacy to ensure girls and girls' programs are prioritized in COVID-19 responses.