

Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Programming and Allocations Committee
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

June 8, 2021

Re: RESUBMISSION- Agenda Items:

- **3a - 21-0750, Clipper® STARTSM Pilot Extension, and**
- **4b - 21-0692, American Rescue Plan Act Transit Funding Policy Considerations**

Dear Committee Members,

We strongly support extending the Clipper® STARTSM Pilot by 18 months. This extension brings a more coherent and logical schedule for fare programs during transit recovery. In particular, this extension:

- Ensures transit affordability and maintains focus on equity during a period of unique economic challenges and when economic disparities are immense;
- Affords an opportunity to meet the original intent of the pilot by granting the time necessary to reach the enrollment target;
- Allows for broader agency participation at a time when the value of interagency fare coordination and strategic pricing are being considered in greater depth; and
- Maintains this interim equity solution until the scheduled Clipper® 2 update in 2023 allows for a more comprehensive approach.

Clipper® STARTSM expands access to transit for people for whom cost may be a barrier. Thank you for supporting equity, flexibility, and continuity in the region's transit recovery and growth strategy.

Regarding the distribution of American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds (item 4b), SPUR supports the following:

- **SPUR continues to support putting operators on a level playing field** and addressing inequities among individual transit agencies in the distribution of prior federal relief funds to ensure that agencies that are carrying the most transit-dependent riders most efficiently, on transit-only lanes for instance, should be prioritized for increased funding. This approach will emphasize financial need over urbanized area (UZA) formulas.
- **SPUR supports dedicating ARP resources necessary to advance the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force (BTRTF) Transformation Action Plan.** The primary focus of federal funds should be on restoring service hours to support operations, avoid layoffs and improve service on high-demand corridors, where possible. At the same

time, our region has a unique opportunity to advance transit reforms that will support strong, customer-oriented transit performance across the region, ensuring that the transit recovery continues well beyond this brief period of emergency relief. Without resources for implementation, the BTRTF recommendations will have little meaning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Laura Tolko', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Laura Tolko
Transportation Policy Director
SPUR