



July 1, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: Support of Sacramento Regional Transit District &
El Dorado Transit's BUILD Application**

Dear Ms. Chao:

The Sacramento Transit Riders Union (SacTRU) is a community coalition of public transit riders including neighborhood leaders, transit workers, student groups, community organizations, small business associations, and workers' rights groups. We believe access to public transportation is a civil right and that full funding for public transit is imperative in order to ensure that low-income and vulnerable communities have access to jobs, housing, health care, education, grocery stores, and childcare among other needs. SacTRU believes that this grant will enable our region to reach its goals of providing well-planned, affordable public transportation that is essential for daily commutes, increasing mobility for the elderly, reducing pollution, and increasing our region's economic activity.

SacTRU supports the Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) and El Dorado Transit grant application to the US Department of Transportation's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grant program.

SacRT's application will make significant investments in the state of good repair, reliability and safety of the Sacramento region's transportation network. If funded, the partners plan to replace light-rail vehicles that are well beyond their useful life with modern low-floor cars, renovate existing stations to make them compatible with the new low floor vehicles, and replace aging buses on routes that provide critical connections to the light rail system. This proposal leverages the large investment that the state of California and the Sacramento region recently made in the modernization of the region's light rail system.

We support SacRT's goal to convert its entire fleet of light rail vehicles to low-floor vehicles in the near future. The current fleet of high-floor cars require that individuals navigate steep stairs to the ground, which creates risk of passenger injuries and discourages riders with limited mobility—as well as riders traveling with bicycles, strollers or luggage—from using the transit system. As the population ages, it will become even more important to quickly convert SacRT's light rail fleet, particularly the 36 light rail vehicles that are already beyond their useful life, from high floor to low floor. SacRT is ready to start on this project in the next year, and fully funding this transition to a modern, low-floor fleet as quickly and seamlessly as possible is essential to the continued success of our transit system.

As the Northern California Megaregion continues to take shape, the transit services provided by SacRT will be critical to the mobility of its 12 million plus residents. We support this innovative and comprehensive solution that will promote inclusive economic growth in our region.

Sincerely,

Sarah Kerber, Board Secretary of Organize Sacramento
On behalf of the Sacramento Transit Riders Union
Sarah@organizesacramento.org