



August 26, 2017

James Drake
RT Principal Planner
1400 29th Street
Sacramento, CA 95816

Re: Connect Card Title VI Comments

Dear Mr. Drake:

The Sacramento Transit Riders Union (Sac TRU) is writing to express our concerns for Regional Transit's new fare changes in accordance with Federal Title VI civil rights requirements. The newly introduced fares leave out many riders from being able to access added benefits. RT is providing free transfers for 90 minutes for mobile only fares and Connect Card users, while not extending the same benefit to customers paying a cash fare.

Transit riders are ineligible to participate in this benefit if they do not own a smart phone, have a bank account, or own a credit card necessary to purchase and use the RT Mobile App or Connect Card. The Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) recently found that 15% of Sacramento families do not have a savings or checking account – nearly twice the national rate. In Sacramento, 17% of families live in poverty, but far more (47%) are financially vulnerable. We believe 45.7% of RT's fixed-route ridership, who are low-income riders, will not be able to easily access these services because of these financial and technological barriers.

Additionally, the RT Mobile Fare App and Connect Card website are available in English only. Over 37 percent of Sacramento residents speak a non-English language at home and 16 percent report that they speak English less than "very well," which is twice the national average of people who are considered Limited English Proficient (LEP). This makes accessing these services and understanding their benefits difficult if not impossible for this population.

The purpose of a Title VI fare equity analysis is to identify and document any potential disparate impacts on minority populations or disproportionate burdens on low-income populations resulting from changes to RT's fare structure. There is no analysis contained in RT's Title VI report of the disadvantage that LEP Riders will face in accessing these new fares. **We believe this is a violation of the Title VI equity provision and request the analysis reflect the impact the new fares will have on LEP riders.**

This fare change represents a disturbing trend with RT's fare structure of creating benefits that are not accessible to low income or LEP riders. **We urge the RT Board to make the 90 minute free transfer available to all riders regardless of socioeconomic status or language barriers.** Please include this letter in the public record.

Sincerely,

Sarah Kerber
Sac TRU

Russell Rawlings
President, DOGFITE

cc: Sacramento Regional Transit Board Members
Henry Li, General Manager/CEO