



The Bus Coalition (TBC) is an association of over 350 members from 45 states working together to ensure adequate funding for critical bus transit programs. In places large and small, bus transit has proven *a vital lifeline and an engine of opportunity for millions of Americans.*

In 2021, TBC 's members are excited about three opportunities for federal bus investments: **1) FAST ACT Reauthorization, 2) FY22 appropriations plus-ups & 3) Transit as a key part of an infrastructure package.** *Please see details of our spending requests on page 2.*

Federal Funding Cuts Hurt Bus Transit

Buses are the backbone of the U.S. transit network, accounting for more than half of annual transit trips. However, in recent years, a lack of federal resources has caused considerable challenges for local transit agencies.

In 2012, MAP-21 cut annual bus funding by 57%, from \$984 million to \$422 million, and the bus competitive grant program was completely eliminated. While other transit programs received funding increases, spending for buses and bus facilities fell from 21% to 9% of federal transit capital programs.

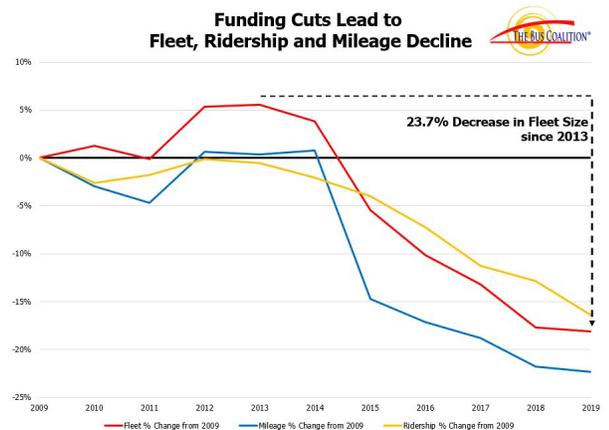
In 2015, the FAST Act restored some funding for bus programs and brought back the competitive grant account. However, more funding is needed to bring bus transit agencies to a state of good repair. **In 2021, authorized funding for bus transit remains 15% lower than it was in 2012.**

Due to fund diversions from buses, fleets have gotten older and smaller.

- According to 2019 NTD data, the percentage of buses operating past useful life increased 41% while buses operating past 15 years increased 82%.
- In addition, the U.S. bus fleet size has shrunk by an astonishing 16,787 buses in just six years. **Nearly a quarter of the bus fleet has disappeared from American roads since 2013.**

It's clear the diversion of resources away from bus programs has taken its toll on transit service and the riders it serves. **The 24% reduction in fleet size directly corresponds to the 22% reduction in service hours and a 16% reduction in ridership. This trend aligns directly with the timeline of cuts to bus capital programs starting in 2012.**

The restoration of this efficient and accessible transportation option depends on predictable funding, timely maintenance and support for its dedicated transit workforce. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has put a significant strain on local bus transit agencies. The Bus Coalition is grateful for the federal support to sustain bus operations. However, increased bus capital funding remains critical to ensure public transit systems can do their part to support our nation's economic recovery.



*The clearest evidence of damage to US bus transit ridership has been **federal disinvestment in the nation's bus fleet**, especially in the years following deep funding cuts from MAP-21 in 2012.*

Mobility: Buses carry more than 51% of all transit trips, and offer a crucial means of transportation to work, school, health care and community activities.

Equity: 69% of bus riders have household incomes less than \$50,000 -- and in many communities of color, buses can provide affordable, safe, transit to people in need.

Jobs: On its own, the public transportation industry employs 435,890 people - half of those working in bus transit. Substantial investment in our transit infrastructure would increase that job creating power dramatically.

Safety: Public transit is 10 times safer per mile than traveling by automobile. And investments in our bus network can amplify safe mobility in communities nationwide.

Energy & Emissions Reduction: Public transit saves the US 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline and reduces carbon emissions by 37 million metric tons. More buses and growing riders are part of a visionary green economy.

THE BUS COALITION'S 2021 SPENDING REQUESTS

FAST Act Reauthorization: TBC is advocating for robust funding increases for the 5339 Bus and Bus Facility Program in the next reauthorization. The Bus Coalition supports the following key objectives:

- Restore bus transit investment to the historic 40-40-20 ratio. Buses historically received 20% of the transit capital investment ratio. Today, buses only receive 14%.
- Significantly increase funding for the bus competitive grant program for both buses and facility improvements to allow for lumpy capital purchases.

The House-passed INVEST Act meets TBC's objectives and we believe the bill should serve as a model for the next Reauthorization. The major funding provisions of the INVEST Act TBC supports include:

- Bus and Bus Facilities Funding increase 150% from \$808 million in FY21 to \$2.15 billion in FY25
- 5339a formula increase from \$464 million to \$1.3 billion by FY25
- 5339a subformula to replace older buses (~ \$190 million/year)
- 5339b Bus Facilities and Expansion competitive grant program (~ \$378 million/year)
- 5339c Zero Emission Bus competitive grant program (~ \$356 million/year)

FY22 Appropriations Request: TBC supports a plus-up of \$432 million in additional investments for the Bus and Bus Facility competitive grant program (5339b). The request would bring bus transit in line with the historic 40-40-20 capital investment ratio and is needed to address the significant aging and shrinking national bus fleet.

Infrastructure Package: An infrastructure package presents a unique opportunity to develop a world class transit system in the United States. Specifically, robust investments in the Bus and Bus Facility program could revolutionize mobility options, provide long overdue, reliable access to underserved communities and catalyze innovations in safety, technology and clean and efficient buses.

The Bus Coalition supports an infrastructure package investment of the capital Bus and Bus Facility program (5339) at a 100% federal cost share over five years to, at minimum, do the following:

- Replace the 14,088 buses operating past useful life;
- Restore the bus transit fleet size to at least 2013 levels. Bus transit experienced a 24% decline in fleet size - 16,787 buses in six short years - in part because of federal cuts to the Bus and Bus Facility program;
- Replace the 14,604 smaller cutaway buses and transit vans operating past useful life; and
- Repair and replace 1,800 transit facilities nationwide identified in FTA's Transit Asset Management Plan to meet a state of good repair.

These investments in bus transit would create more than 1.2 million jobs*, procure 45,479 domestically manufactured buses and vans and construct more than 1,800 transit facilities across the country.

(* based on average bus replacement costs and APTA Transit Calculator of 49,700 jobs per \$1 billion investment)

"The lack of investment in bus capital has created a real challenge for transit operators. Our buses are older, dirtier, less reliable and cost more to maintain. Our fleet size is also shrinking substantially. All these factors are having a real negative impact on ridership and levels of service." - **Bill Carpenter, TBC President**

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