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UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
November 2, 2020

Ms. K. Jane Williams
Deputy Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Ms. Williams,

I am writing to express my support for the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority's (MART) application for a *Public Transportation COVID-19 Research Demonstration Grant* from the Federal Transit Administration. The grant seeks to enhance transportation services in response to COVID-19.

As you may know, MART is a regional transit authority in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that provides public transit services to more than 20 communities in North Central Massachusetts, including through contracts with private operators. These services include fixed bus routes, paratransit services, Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) night services, and assistance for local councils on aging. Notably, the fixed route bus system runs throughout the cities of Fitchburg and Gardner, as well as linked routes and services in the towns of Winchendon, Lunenburg, and Lancaster – all of which are in the Third Congressional District. It also provides complementary paratransit services to the fixed route services.

In response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, MART and QRyde – a Lowell, Massachusetts-based transit technology firm – are partnering to support the integration of community-based transportation with a contactless mobility payment and subsidy management system. The grant applicant and its private-sector partner seek to demonstrate that the system will allow healthcare facilities, veteran service organizations, and workforce organizations to negotiate better prices for consumers and ease the booking process across a range of transportation providers while managing payments and subsidies. Moreover, the applicant contends that the project will reduce the cost of service delivery and make paying fares safer.

The applicant also asserts that the system will benefit not only riders and transportation providers, but also agency partners and public entities interested in more payment methods and mobility data. The project's results will also signal its potential scalability and replicability beyond Massachusetts.

Consequently, I respectfully request that the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority's (MART) application for the Public Transportation COVID-19 Research Demonstration Grant Program receives full and fair consideration by the Federal Transit Administration. If you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Emily Byrne, my District Director, at (978) 459-0101.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Trahan".

Lori Trahan
Member of Congress (MA-03)