
COTA Hosts Impactful Advocacy Event Urging Congress to Pass Long-term Federal Transportation Bill

More than 100 transportation supporters attend Stand Up 4 Transportation Day event

COLUMBUS—More than 100 transportation supporters gathered yesterday morning at the Central Ohio Transit Authority's (COTA) new Spring Street Terminal to 'Stand Up 4 Transportation' and advocate on behalf of a long-term federal transportation infrastructure bill.

Stand Up 4 Transportation Day, spearheaded by the American Public Transportation Association, featured events hosted by more than 300 organizations nationwide and highlighted the urgent need for Congress to renew federal transportation funding before Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (also known as MAP-21) expires on May 31, 2015.

"Today, we stand united to send a clear message to Congress that now is the time to pass a robust, long-term surface transportation authorization bill that will provide certainty for planning, maintaining and building our nation's transportation infrastructure," said **Curtis Stitt**, COTA President/CEO.

Stitt stressed the importance of long-term, dependable transportation infrastructure funding in central Ohio, the fastest growing region in the state – with projections for population growth of 500,000 and job growth of 300,000 by the year 2050. He added that if the Federal Transit Administration's Small Starts Program is not authorized, central Ohio will lose \$38 million that has been recommended in the President's 2016 budget proposal for CMAX, Columbus's first Bus Rapid Transit line.

Speakers at the event included **Dawn Tyler Lee**, Chair of the COTA Board of Trustees, **Marilyn Brown**, President of the Board of Franklin County Commissioners, State Representative **Mike Stinziano**, Ohio House of Representatives, **Shannon Hardin**, Columbus City Councilmember, **Chris Runyan**, President of the Ohio Contractors Association, **William Murdock**, Executive Director of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, and Congresswoman **Joyce Beatty**, 3rd Congressional District.

"You, the people, are our life blood, but our roads are the arteries and veins that carry you to and from the various parts of the region," said City of Columbus Councilmember **Shannon Hardin**. "Columbus is a city of the present and of the future, and we must prepare for that. We need certainty in our partnerships with the state and federal departments of transportation."

Chris Runyan, President of the Ohio Contractors Association, provided additional insight into the impact federal transportation infrastructure funding has on Ohio.

"Nearly \$1 billion, on average slightly over half of the Ohio Department of Transportation's capital construction budget, comes from the federal government," he said. "The design, construction and maintenance of Ohio's transportation infrastructure supports the equivalent of 109,000 jobs."

Supporters were called on to sign a petition in support of transportation infrastructure funding.

Congresswoman **Joyce Beatty** declared her support, stating, "I am honored to be here to say, 'I am with you.'"

Stitt was joined at the podium by the following city, county, regional and state government leaders, transportation professionals and advocates, trade groups, contractors, business and community leaders:

Ohio Public Transit Association
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
Ohio Department of Transportation
DATABus
Conference of Minority Transportation Officials
Women's Transportation Seminar
Columbus Chamber of Commerce
Experience Columbus
Ohio Contractors Association
McDaniel's Construction Corp.
Transit Columbus
Yay Bikes!
Short North Alliance

Forge Columbus
CoGo Bike Share
Car2Go
Ohio House of Representatives –
Rep. Mike Stinziano
Senator Sherrod Brown's Office - Joe Gilligan
Franklin County Commissioners
Franklin County Engineer
Columbus City Council –
Shannon Hardin & Jaiza Page
City of Bexley
City of Grandview Heights
City of Upper Arlington
Tenth District Court of Appeals –
Judge Jennifer Brunner

COTA's Spring Street Transit Terminal is located at 33 W. Spring Street in downtown Columbus. This new facility, completed in February 2015, replaces a terminal that was in need of significant upgrades and serves as an example of recent infrastructure investment COTA has made in the central Ohio community.

Visit www.standup4transportation.org and COTA.com/StandUp for more information, or engage on Twitter using #StandUp4Transportation.

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Attached Images:

Photos by Shellee Fisher

SU4TPhoto1: A 2015 COTA bus on-site at the newly renovated COTA Spring Street Terminal.

SU4TPhoto2: Dawn Tyler Lee, Chair of the COTA Board of Trustees, welcomes guests to Stand Up 4 Transportation Day.

SU4TPhoto3: Curtis Stitt, COTA President/CEO, stresses the importance of long-term, dependable transportation infrastructure funding in central Ohio.

SU4TPhoto4: Congresswoman Joyce Beatty declares her support for a long-term federal transportation infrastructure bill.

SU4TPhoto5: Supporters were called on to sign a petition in support of transportation infrastructure funding.



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