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October 26th, 2022

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Senator
478 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Gillibrand:

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) would like to applaud your leadership in introducing the *Resilient Transit Act*. This legislation, which proposes creating an additional source of funding dedicated toward resilience improvement projects would provide a critical investment in one of the nation's most strained sectors of infrastructure. By authorizing \$300 million for Fiscal Years (FY) 2023-2026, through the existing State of Good Repair Grants Program, the *Resilient Transit Act* will go a long way to ensuring our nation's vital transit systems can withstand increasingly strong storm events.

Public transportation services form an important fabric for communities across the country, providing access to jobs, schools, and healthcare facilities. ASCE represents the professionals who design, construct, and maintain the country's transit systems, and we encourage investment intended to make public transportation safer for both system engineers and users.

ASCE's *2021 Report Card for America's Infrastructure*, found that transit earned a "D-", the lowest grade of any category. ASCE believes the *Resilient Transit Act*, which would support projects' abilities to withstand natural disasters, responds directly to some of the challenges mentioned in the Report Card, such as sea level rise and extreme winter weather. Additionally, the Report Card found there is currently a \$176 billion transit backlog, a deficit that is expected to grow to more than \$270 billion through 2029. Increased investment through meaningful federal programs such as the State of Good Repair Grants Program can help to reduce this backlog, especially when combined with additional investments provided by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

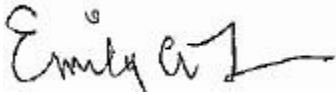
Additionally, ASCE supports initiatives that increase the resilience of infrastructure against natural and man-made hazards through design, construction, operation, and maintenance. We believe the projects supported by the *Resilient Transit Act* could also benefit from ASCE's manual of practice titled "Hazard-Resilient Infrastructure: Analysis and Design" as well as ASCE's codes and standards, which are intended to cut down recovery costs. Among the eligible activities listed in the bill are the assessment of system vulnerabilities and the planning of

system improvements to address such vulnerabilities. ASCE supports these activities and views an asset management strategy as an effective way to prioritize essential repairs and plan for long-term needs.

Finally, the IIJA, which ASCE strongly supported, included certain provisions to improve resilience. However, these provisions were not exclusively aimed at transit infrastructure. We appreciate this bill's goal of providing resilience funding specifically to public transportation systems, which face unique and growing investment needs.

Once again, we would like to thank you for your leadership in introducing this legislation and we are glad to support it. We welcome the opportunity to work with your office on this bill's path forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Feenstra", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Emily Feenstra
Chief Policy and External Affairs Officer
American Society of Civil Engineers