

# LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT ACT



The Light Rail Transit (LRT) Act would create a light rail grant program to provide grants to public entities for the design and implementation of light rail projects. Funds from the program could be used to establish, maintain, and expand light rail systems. Empowering our chronically underfunded transit systems with resources is critical to racial, climate, disability, and economic justice. Every year, the federal government underfunds transit systems that serve low- and middle-income communities and create jobs. Meanwhile, regular people have taken matters into their own hands and put excellent transit funding proposals on the ballot. This year 29/36, or 80%, of public transit measures on the ballot have passed.<sup>1</sup>

The grant program created by the bill would provide flexibility for agencies and communities applying for funds, while also maintaining strong design standards to ensure passengers have the resources and tools they need for seamless travel. The excellent labor and climate standards in the bill would ensure 1000's of union jobs would be created while cars are taken off the road and new rail lines rely on renewable energy.

The LRT Act will contribute to bridging the extraordinary gap in equitable transportation in the United States. Asian-American and African-American workers commute by public transit at nearly 4 times the rate of white workers. Latino workers commute by public transit at nearly 3 times the rate of white workers. There is only one metro area in the country, Honolulu, where Black and white workers commute by public transit at similar rates.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the grant program created by this bill will benefit everyone, and disproportionately help those who need it the most.

In addition to improving racial equity, the Light Rail Transit Act will reduce traffic and accidents caused by cars. Riding commuter or interurban rail is about 20 times safer than driving, and riding metro or light rail is about 30 times safer.<sup>3</sup> In St. Louis and other communities around the country, traffic deaths are all too common. With the founding of this program, transportation options will increase and lives will be saved.

**Endorsements:** *Bus Riders United STL, Action St. Louis Power Project, teens for climate stl, Center for Biological Diversity, Trailnet, Rise to Thrive, Food & Water Watch, GreenLatinos, Sunrise Movement, Zero Hour, St. Louis Democratic Socialists of America, Earthworks, Honor the Earth, Oil Change International, National Association of City Transportation Officials*

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.apta.com/news-publications/press-releases/releases/voters-across-the-country-support-public-transportation-at-the-ballot-box/>

<sup>2</sup> [To Move Is To Thrive: Public Transit and Economic Opportunity for People of Color | Demos](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Here's How Much Safer Transit Is Compared to Driving – Streetsblog USA](#)