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(Original Signature of Member)

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R.

To establish, maintain, and expand frequent, reliable, interconnected light rail transit service to expand racial, economic, and environmental justice, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. BUSH introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To establish, maintain, and expand frequent, reliable, interconnected light rail transit service to expand racial, economic, and environmental justice, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Light Rail Transit
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PROGRAM.**

7 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 120 days after
8 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Trans-

1 portation, acting through the Administrator of the Federal
2 Transit Administration, shall establish a program to pro-
3 vide grants to eligible public entities for the design and
4 implementation of covered light rail transit systems.

5 (b) APPLICATION.—To be eligible for a grant under
6 this section, an eligible public entity shall submit to the
7 Secretary an application at such time, in such manner,
8 and containing such information as the Secretary may re-
9 quire.

10 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible public entity receiv-
11 ing a grant under this section may use such grant for—

12 (1) the design and implementation of a covered
13 light rail transit system, including the design, acqui-
14 sition, operations, maintenance, construction, and
15 leasing of required supporting facilities, and integra-
16 tion and improvement of other connected or nearby
17 rail or bus corridors, bicycle infrastructure, and pe-
18 destrian infrastructure;

19 (2) procuring and installing renewable energy
20 to power train infrastructure;

21 (3) the redesign, retrofit, renovation, update,
22 and repair of existing light rail systems to bring
23 such systems up to the standard of covered light rail
24 transit systems;

1 (4) training current employees to effectively op-
2 erate, maintain, or otherwise adapt to new tech-
3 nologies relating to a covered light rail transit sys-
4 tem;

5 (5) operating costs to increase service fre-
6 quencies on light rail transit routes that otherwise
7 conform with this Act;

8 (6) reducing or eliminating fares as part of eli-
9 gible projects; and

10 (7) public engagement and participatory plan-
11 ning processes that meaningfully incorporate input
12 from community members impacted by the covered
13 light rail transit systems, including representatives
14 from local labor organizations and other community
15 groups, including those described subsection (d)(4).

16 (d) REQUIREMENTS.—As a condition of accepting a
17 grant under this section, an eligible public entity (other
18 than a Tribal authority) shall—

19 (1) agree to take steps, in consultation with
20 community groups and tenant advocates, to secure
21 existing housing in neighborhoods receiving benefits
22 from such grant, including through the use of rent
23 control, rent stabilization, or other methods to sta-
24 bilize existing residents and prevent gentrification
25 residential displacement;

1 (2) ensure safety for covered light rail transit
2 systems funded by such a grant by employing Elec-
3 tric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program
4 (EVITP)-certified electricians for the installation
5 and maintenance of the electric components of the
6 charging infrastructure;

7 (3) provide to the Secretary in the application
8 for such a grant information on what such steps the
9 entity will take and how the entity will carry out the
10 activities described in paragraph (1);

11 (4) develop transit-oriented development plans
12 for the area located around station stops that in-
13 clude new affordable housing or public housing;

14 (5) provide to the Secretary a public engage-
15 ment, outreach, and education plan that illustrates
16 the grantee's commitment to meeting the mobility
17 needs of the entire community that will be served by
18 the covered light rail transit system, including strat-
19 egies to incorporate input from local labor organiza-
20 tions and other community groups, including envi-
21 ronmental advocates, racial justice advocates, tenant
22 advocates, youth advocates, transit advocates, and
23 disability rights advocates; and

1 (6) certify that the covered light rail transit
2 system funded by such grant shall operate on an ei-
3 ther flat-fare or fare-free basis.

4 (e) PROHIBITION IN IMPACT ON FARES.—As a condi-
5 tion on receipt of a grant under this section, an eligible
6 public entity shall certify to the Secretary that the fares
7 for riding the covered light rail transit system—

8 (1) shall not increase solely due to the improve-
9 ments carried out with funds provided under this
10 section; and

11 (2) shall not increase for any reason for at least
12 1 year after the completion of the project funded
13 under this section.

14 (f) PRIORITY FOR ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
15 COMMUNITIES.—In carrying out the program under this
16 section, the Secretary shall prioritize projects located in
17 economically disadvantaged communities.

18 **SEC. 3. SPECIAL RULES FOR TRIBES.**

19 (a) SET-ASIDE.—Contingent on sufficient qualifying
20 applicants for grants under this Act that are Tribal au-
21 thorities, the Secretary shall ensure that 5 percent of such
22 grants are awarded to such applicants.

23 (b) CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION AS COVERED
24 LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM.—With respect to a grants
25 provided to a Tribal authority, notwithstanding section

1 5(2)(A), a transit system for which funds are provided
2 under this Act shall be considered a covered light rail tran-
3 sit system by meeting 4 of the criteria listed in sections
4 5(2)(A)(x) and 7 of the criteria listed in section
5 5(2)(A)(xi).

6 **SEC. 4. FUNDING REQUIREMENTS.**

7 (a) FEDERAL SHARE.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share of a
9 grant under this Act shall not exceed 85 percent.

10 (2) PROJECTS IN ECONOMICALLY DISADVAN-
11 TAGED COMMUNITIES.—Notwithstanding paragraph
12 (1), the Federal share for a project located in and
13 benefitting an economically disadvantaged commu-
14 nity may be up to 100 percent if the Secretary de-
15 termines that—

16 (A) the project is part of an approved
17 transportation plan required under sections
18 5303 and 5304 of title 49, United States Code;
19 and

20 (B) the applicant has, or will have—

21 (i) the legal, financial, and technical
22 capacity to carry out the project, including
23 the safety and security aspects of the
24 project;

1 (ii) satisfactory continuing control
2 over the use of the equipment or facilities;
3 and

4 (iii) the technical and financial capac-
5 ity to maintain new and existing equip-
6 ment and facilities.

7 (b) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—None of the
8 funds made available by this Act may be used to employ
9 or otherwise enter into a contract for local, State, or Fed-
10 eral law enforcement officers or fare collectors who are
11 armed.

12 (c) SPECIAL RULE.—No financial assistance under
13 chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code, may be used
14 for an automated vehicle providing public transportation
15 unless the recipient of such assistance that proposes to
16 deploy an automated vehicle providing public transpor-
17 tation certifies to the Secretary that the deployment does
18 not eliminate or reduce the frequency of existing public
19 transportation service.

20 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
21 authorized to be appropriated \$60,000,000,000 total for
22 fiscal years 2024 through 2028 to carry out this Act.

23 **SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.**

24 In this Act:

1 (1) ELIGIBLE PUBLIC ENTITY.—The term “eli-
2 gible public entity” means a local, Tribal, or State
3 governmental authority, including metropolitan plan-
4 ning organizations, transit agencies, port authorities,
5 and regional entities, or multiple adjacent authori-
6 ties submitting a joint application.

7 (2) COVERED LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM.—
8 The term “covered light rail transit system” means
9 a publicly owned light rail transit system that—

10 (A) has—

11 (i) accessibility for all customers, in-
12 cluding those who are physically, visually,
13 or hearing-impaired, as well as those with
14 temporary disabilities, the elderly, children,
15 parents with strollers, and other load-car-
16 rying passengers;

17 (ii) all rail lines, routes, and stations
18 in system follow single unifying brand of
19 entire light rail transit system;

20 (iii) functioning real-time and up-to-
21 date static passenger information system-
22 wide that is available during all hours of
23 operation;

24 (iv) physical transfer points integrated
25 with other public transit;

- 1 (v) safe and accessible pedestrian de-
2 sign at each station, with a continuous
3 walking path network along the entire cor-
4 ridor;
- 5 (vi) service frequency no less than 6
6 trains per hour on all routes;
- 7 (vii) at least 3 elements out of—
8 (I) off board fare collection;
9 (II) traffic signal priority
10 (III) a system that includes mul-
11 tiple routes or is connected to an ex-
12 isting route;
- 13 (IV) a fare system that can be
14 integrated with other modes of trans-
15 port; or
- 16 (V) platform level boarding; and
- 17 (viii) at least 8 elements out of—
18 (I) multiple routes sharing cor-
19 ridors;
- 20 (II) limited and express services;
21 (III) a full service control center;
22 (IV) location in 1 of the locality's
23 top 10 demand corridors;
- 24 (V) late night and weekend serv-
25 ice;

1 (VI) 90 percent of stations offer
2 seating, are weather-protected, well-
3 lit, and at least 8 feet wide;

4 (VII) all stations have sliding
5 doors;

6 (VIII) secure bicycle parking at
7 least in higher-demand stations and
8 standard bicycle racks elsewhere;

9 (IX) bicycle lanes on or parallel
10 to 75 percent of the corridor;

11 (X) bicycle sharing available at
12 50 percent or more of stations;

13 (XI) elimination or prohibition on
14 parking minimums in the area of the
15 system;

16 (XII) service frequency of no less
17 than 7 trains per hour on all routes;

18 (B) powers trains and train infrastructure
19 with renewable energy;

20 (C) uses labor standards at least as protec-
21 tive as the labor standards described in section
22 5333 of title 49, United States Code; and

23 (D) meets domestic assembly qualifications
24 for its trains.

1 (3) DOMESTIC ASSEMBLY QUALIFICATIONS.—

2 The term “domestic assembly qualifications” means,
3 with respect to any qualifying train, that the final
4 assembly of such a train occurs at a plant, factory,
5 or other place which is located in the United States
6 and operating under a collective bargaining agree-
7 ment negotiated by an employee organization (as de-
8 fined in section 412(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue
9 Code of 1986), determined in a manner consistent
10 with section 7701(a)(46) of such Code.

11 (4) ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED COMMU-

12 NITY.—The term “economically disadvantaged com-
13 munity” means an economically disadvantaged com-
14 munity, including an environmental justice commu-
15 nity, an underserved community, or a community lo-
16 cated in an area of persistent poverty (as such term
17 is defined in section 101 of title 23, United States
18 Code).

19 (5) PLATFORM LEVEL BOARDING.—The term

20 “platform level boarding” means a platform for
21 boarding a train that contains no more than 0.5
22 inch vertical gap between the train floor and the sta-
23 tion platform.

1 (6) RENEWABLE ENERGY.—The term “renew-
2 able energy” means solar, wind, geothermal, and
3 tidal energy.