



Metro Transit

Chuck Kamp, Transit General Manager

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Date: April 13, 2011

To: Joint Finance Committee Members
Wisconsin State Legislature

From: Chuck Kamp, GM
Metro Transit, Madison

Chuck Kamp
4/13/11

Subject: 2011-13 Biennial Budget

On behalf of Metro Transit, a department of the City of Madison, I offer the following suggestions regarding the 2011-13 State Budget. First, I recommend that you keep public transit operating assistance funding in the state segregated transportation budget where it has been for decades, not the state general fund as proposed in the budget. The former provides a more stable and reliable source of funding for transit, and appropriately is balanced with other transportation priorities. The latter is a less appropriate source for transit funding in that transit will be balanced with education, health services, and other non-transportation needs.

Second, I recommend a 5% increase in state transit operating assistance, not a 10% decrease. With gas prices rising, Metro is seeing increases in ridership in early 2011 (5% through February, and rising). Our fuel costs this year will be over \$1 million more than 2010 because of large increases in oil and gasoline costs. Investments in transit are needed now more than ever as families balance their budgets by driving less and using transit more with gas prices projected to rise above \$4 per gallon. State performance audits and studies show Wisconsin transit systems

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return over \$3 to the economy for every \$1 of investment, and that we perform better than our peers across the nation. Madison's bus system, for example, has a 19% lower cost per ride and 41% better ridership productivity than our national peers. 50% of our riders use transit to get to jobs, and another 33% use it to get to school, to prepare for being contributing members of society.

Third, the binding referendum required for RTA's in the proposed budget is acceptable.

Thank you for the opportunity to share suggestions to the 2011-13 biennial budget. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at 608-266-4904.