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EQUITY POLICY

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ITS America Equity Policy

Introduction

Today's transportation systems suffer from historic and ongoing inequities embedded in infrastructure, access, and cost. As we explore and fulfill the promise of new technologies, we must embrace and support the paradigm shift occurring in our nation, learn from the lessons of the past, and incorporate transportation equity principles into policy, research, and implementation strategies. This must include explicit consideration of technology's effects on those least prepared to use it or who face particular barriers to adoption to ensure their safety, access, and mobility are not compromised.

Policy Recommendations

1. Increase the federal match up to 100 percent for installation of intelligent transportation systems for vulnerable road users, including vehicle-to-pedestrian (V2P) safety system, vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) safety system, pedestrian signals, bicyclist detection signals, way-finding services and systems serving persons with low vision, in a federally designated community development zone, including, but not limited to, qualified Opportunity Zone, Empowerment Zones, Promise Zones, or Choice Neighborhoods.

2. Maintain formula-based funding for public transit at 80/20 highway/transit, raise the transit share of transfers from the Treasury's General Fund, double the authorized funding level for the Capital Investment Grants account from the Treasury's General Fund, and provide greater flexibility to public transit systems to use Urban Area Formula Grants – 5307 for operating assistance to fund smart transit technologies. Funding would support the development of comprehensive transit cybersecurity preparedness plans and their implementation. Technologies include, but not limited to—
    2.1. Connected vehicle technologies that allow traffic signal controllers to communicate with vehicles and connected-vehicle technology that will give buses priority to pass through intersections;
    2.2. Smart-transit bus shelters that inform riders of estimated times of arrival, real-time passenger information systems, including providing travelers with traffic information in real time and dynamic routing to reduce commute times;
    2.3. Computer hardware and software, data services hardware and software, operations and vehicle diagnostic hardware and software, and other equipment that enhances operating efficiency;
    2.4. New or expanded reservation and smart fare collection systems;
    2.5. The acquisition of bus and rail vehicles that are more sustainable and energy efficient to reduce emissions;
    2.6. The integration of Mobility on Demand and Mobility as a Service transit integration;

2.7. Automated safety systems; and

2.8. The integration of transit apps with parking and micromobility transportation apps to reduce congestion.

3. Establish Mobility-on-Demand as an eligible activity under Urbanized Area Formula Grants – 5307, Formula Grants for Rural Areas – 5311, and Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities - Section 5310 in order to give transit operators increased flexibility for providing high quality service. Establish within 49 USC § 5312 Public Transportation Innovation Program new funding for a mobility innovation grant research program for new mobility programs or continued deployments. Make the federal share up to 100 percent eligible for projects that offer first mile/last mile service, including autonomous delivery of groceries and other essentials, in a federally designated community development zone, including, but not limited to, qualified Opportunity Zones, Empowerment Zones, Promise Zones, or Choice Neighborhoods (or areas classified as food deserts by the U.S. Department of Agriculture).

4. Establish an FTA program to provide subsidized or free access to transit and transit integrated Mobility on Demand programs, including bikeshare and scooter share programs, for low-income and disadvantaged transit riders in rural and urban federally designated community development zones, including, but not limited to, qualified Opportunity Zones, Empowerment Zones, Promise Zones, or Choice Neighborhoods.

5. Support policy in the reauthorization of the FAST Act requiring Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to include automated safety systems, payment systems, and real-time information with a focus on supporting and expanding equity goals or objectives in long-range transportation plans (LRTP).

6. Encourage the Secretary of Transportation to prioritize safety, equity, accessibility, inclusion, and community partnerships that incorporate racial equity factors in Department of Transportation grant and loan programs as a selection criterion.

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