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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Juan Vargas
51st District, California

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTOR PROTECTION,
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND CAPITAL MARKETS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING,
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND INSURANCE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY,
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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
WESTERN HEMISPHERE, CIVILIAN SECURITY,
AND TRADE
MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA,
AND INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

April 28, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

I am requesting funding for the “New Zero Emissions Bus Division Project – Planning Phase” project in fiscal year 2023, in the amount of \$1,000,000. The entity to receive the funding is the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System, located at 1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 1000, San Diego, CA 92101. This project would develop a new zero emission bus division for expanded service and operations needs for the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). MTS currently has five bus divisions. The primary functions of a bus division include bus operations, bus maintenance, and administrative support offices. MTS and regional plans envision a vast expansion of bus service including improved headways, requiring an estimated 200-300 additional buses over the next 30 years. Currently, MTS’s five bus divisions are insufficient and could not support additional regional service nor support additional buses.

In 2019, MTS approved a plan to convert its entire bus fleet to a fully zero emission fleet by 2040. In addition to the conversion to a fully zero emission bus (ZEB) fleet, MTS is planning a variety of future expansions to its bus operations, including adding Rapid route conversions; and planning for additional frequencies, new routes and better levels of service on existing routes. In order to accommodate and maintain a fully ZEB fleet and other future expansions, it is critical for MTS to develop an additional bus division to resolve current capacity issues and keep up with future expansion needs in order to continue providing vital, clean, and efficient transportation services to the communities of San Diego.

With a heavier focus on our disadvantaged communities, MTS’s ZEB Transition Plan ensures that the deployment of battery-electric buses and/or other ZEBs are prioritized in historically marginalized low-income and minority communities that are most affected by environmental factors such as the communities that surround MTS’s proposed site for the new zero-emission bus division.

This specific funding request would fund the planning phase of the project. As a regional priority project, the New Zero Emission Bus Division will provide critical additional space to achieve regional climate and mobility goals as well as zero emission bus expansion.

This project has received written support from San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), Environmental Health Coalition, San Diego County Board of Supervisors Chairman Nathan Fletcher, San Diego City Council President Sean Elo-Rivera, and San Diego City Councilmember Monica Montgomery Steppe.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Juan Vargas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress