



**Ohio Association of
Community Action Agencies**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OACAA urges the Senate to approve public transportation budget increase

Public transportation is vital to the success of securing and maintaining gainful employment which provides opportunities for young and low-income Ohioans to reach self-sufficiency. The Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies (OACAA) is urging the Senate to approve the proposed \$1 million increase for public transportation in the upcoming budget to help meet the growing needs of Ohioans.

"Public transportation not only helps people obtain and keep jobs, it is more efficient, cost effective and has a strong environmental impact," said Philip E. Cole, executive director of OACAA. "The \$1 million budget request is just a starting point but a necessary one."

According to the [Ohio Statewide Transit Needs Study](#), the State of Ohio contributed only three percent of the total transit investment last year-- one of the lowest state investments per capita across the country. The study also suggests that in order to preserve existing systems and expand to meet the unmet needs of both urban and rural areas, the state is operating with a \$650.6 million gap this year which nearly doubles by 2025.

"Operating budgets in rural areas across the state are at risk of losing necessary funding to provide needed and affordable transportation-- not only to and from work, but to the grocery store, medical appointments and more," said Cole. "Public transportation is a necessary part to strengthen Ohio's economy and to support the health and safety our low-income neighbors."

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Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other. Community Action Agencies work to alleviate poverty and empower low-income families in their communities. The Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies represents 50 agencies around the state serving the needs of low-income people in all of Ohio's 88 counties. CAAs provide education and training, emergency services, and other assistance programs to over 800,000 Ohioans annually.