

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4606

February 24, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Floor 9
Washington, DC 20003-3660

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I write today in support of Hampton Roads Transit's (HRT) grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program to assist with the construction of the Southside Bus Operating Division Facility.

I understand that this new facility would be able to service, maintain, and store the existing and new buses that are needed to expand service for the Regional Transit System (RTS) and meet HRT's vision of transitioning towards 100 percent fleet electrification levels by 2040. The RTS program includes a 13-route regional backbone bus service that connects six of Virginia's ten largest cities with 15-minute service frequencies and will reach an additional 487,000 citizens. To provide for this expanded service, HRT is purchasing 48 new buses and hiring 122 drivers as well as an appropriate number of technicians and mechanics. In addition, HRT has put Virginia's first all-electric buses into service and will continue to electrify its fleet over a 20-year period.

It is my understanding that the opening of the Southside Bus Operating Division Facility is critical to HRT being able to achieve the target transition date. The new facility will replace a 38-year-old obsolete and undersized facility and will allow for year-round operations, address long-term capacity demands, include charging infrastructure for electric buses, create \$425,400 cumulative operating cost savings per year, and help support nearly 7,000 new daily riders. The new facility will also include applicability to alternative energy sources such as electricity generated from offshore wind farms, geothermal heating, and on-site solar panels.

I ask that you give this proposal every appropriate consideration. To the extent possible, please continue to update my office on the status of this grant by emailing GrantSupport_Warner@warner.senate.gov.

Thank you for your service on behalf of my constituents.

Sincerely,



MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator

MRW/aw

180 WEST MAIN STREET
ABINGDON, VA 24210
PHONE: (276) 628-8158

101 WEST MAIN STREET
SUITE 7771
NORFOLK, VA 23510
PHONE: (757) 441-3079

919 EAST MAIN STREET
SUITE 630
RICHMOND, VA 23219
PHONE: (804) 775-2314

120 LUCK AVENUE, SW
SUITE 108
ROANOKE, VA 24011
PHONE: (540) 857-2676

8150 LEESBURG PIKE
SUITE 700
VIENNA, VA 22182
PHONE: (703) 442-0670

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May 25, 2022

Ms. Nuria I. Fernandez
Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Suite E-57
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Dear Ms. Fernandez,

I write today in support of Hampton Roads Transit's (HRT) grant proposals to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Low or No Emission Vehicle grant program and Buses and Bus Facilities grant program to assist with the construction of the Southside Bus Operating Division Facility.

If awarded, these funds will support a critical component of HRT's expanding service and will meet both HRT's and the U.S. Department of Transportation's goals of moving towards a green-energy future. This project will replace aging, inefficient infrastructure and provide opportunities for good paying jobs in the region. It will also aim to address needs like distributing the fleet more efficiently to reduce deadhead miles and create operating cost savings. The new facility will be built to support up to 100 battery electric buses and will have the ability to use alternative energy sources such as electricity generated from offshore wind farms and on-site solar panels.

HRT plays a vital role in the Hampton Roads economy. They provide transit service to six of Virginia's ten most populous cities. In addition to 72 bus routes, the agency provides ferry, paratransit, seasonal trolley service, and transportation demand management services. HRT is also home to Virginia's only light rail system. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, HRT carried nearly 1,000,000 trips per month across the region on all of its services. I understand that the New Southside Bus Operating Facility will enable the agency to continue to meet its goal of connecting Hampton Roads with transportation solutions that are reliable, safe, efficient, and sustainable.

I ask that you give this proposal every appropriate consideration. To the extent possible, please continue to update my office on the status of this grant by emailing GrantSupport_Warner@warner.senate.gov.

Thank you for your service on behalf of my constituents.

Sincerely,



MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator

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SUITE 108
ROANOKE, VA 24011
PHONE: (540) 857-2676

8000 TOWERS CRESCENT DRIVE
SUITE 200
VIENNA, VA 22182
PHONE: (703) 442-0670