



# TBC Federal Agenda 2025

## **TBC Priority #1: Maintain \$2.2 billion Sec. 5339 Funding Baseline**

**Bus transit continues to be the mobility workhorse in communities across the country.** Throughout the pandemic, flexible bus routes provided a lifeline for essential workers, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities. Buses continue to see the largest recovery in transit ridership when compared to pre-pandemic levels. According to 2024 ridership data from FTA's most recent National Transit Database (NTD), bus ridership is above 83 percent of pre-pandemic levels. Additionally, bus trips make up the majority of transit rides. In 2024, buses made up 52.7 percent of total rides.

Buses are part of the solution to help communities of all sizes provide flexible, safe, and efficient mobility options. **However, the need for additional bus capital funding remains high as the disinvestment in bus programs over the past decade has challenged transit systems and has led to significantly smaller and older fleets.**

Between 2013 and 2023, fleet size nationwide dropped by more than 18,597 buses, or 24.7 percent. Fewer buses mean less service, less reliability, and ultimately fewer riders. While fleet size shrank, the age of buses continued to climb. Between 2009 and 2023, the percentage of buses operating past useful life (12-years) increased 56%. During that same period, the percentage of buses operating over 15 years increased 103% – a staggering doubling of the share of buses operating long after they should have been taken off the road. Older buses do not just mean a less pleasant experience for riders; they also mean more frequent breakdowns, higher maintenance costs, safety risks, and an increased likelihood that riders will be late to work, school, and medical appointments.

**Thus, it is no surprise that demand for bus transit capital funds remains at an all-time high. In 2024, the Bus and Bus Facilities and Low or No Emission competitive grant programs received \$9 billion in funding requests for \$1.5 billion available. This is the largest oversubscription in the program's history.**

Any reduction in funding for buses will further exacerbate the problems with our nation's fleet and delay full ridership recovery. For these reasons, we strongly support maintaining funding for the Bus and Bus Facilities Program (Sec. 5339) at \$2.2 billion in formula and competitive grants as authorized in the final year of IIJA.

***Additional background information and justifications on these reform proposals are included in our full 2025 Legislative Requests document available by request.***

## **About The Bus Coalition**

The Bus Coalition (TBC) is an advocacy association of over 900 members from 50 states and Washington, DC working with the Administration and Bipartisan Members of Congress to ensure adequate funding for the nation's critical bus transit programs.

In communities large and small, bus transit has proven a vital lifeline and an engine of opportunity connecting millions of Americans. TBC stands with transit leaders nationwide in building robust, innovative mobility systems for vibrant communities and stronger economies.

## ***TBC's 2025 Legislative Priorities***

### **Priority 1:**

#### **Bus Funding Levels & Federal Transit Revenue**

**1A:** Maintain \$2.2 billion 5339 Funding Baseline

**1B:** Increase & Index the Federal Gas Tax

**1C:** Maintain Transit Support in Highway Trust Fund

### **Priority 2:**

#### **Grants Application & Administration**

**2A:** 5339 Application Process Reform

**2B:** Local Match Simplification

### **Priority 3:**

#### **Fleet and Facilities Management**

**3A:** NEPA Review Streamlining

**3B:** Spare Ratio Reform

**3C:** Build America / Buy America Reforms

**3D:** NTD Reporting Acceleration

### **Priority 4:**

#### **Next-Generation Fuels and Technology**

**4A:** Emissions Reduction & Fuel Diversity

**4B:** Tech Capital Procurement Reforms