

## 2025 FEDERAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM

County Connection relies on federal transit funding for crucial capital and operational funds to ensure the implementation of a reliable and robust public transportation system. The CARES, CRRSAA, ARP, and the IIJA Acts together placed County Connection in reasonable financial condition as we begin to emerge from the Pandemic. However, the need for an on-going reliable federally funded transit program remains critical to enable County Connection to provide reliable, safe, and effective service to its constituents. Thus, County Connection supports the following:

### **Priority #1: Restore the Federal Highway & Mass Transit Fund**

With the Federal Highway and Mass Transit Accounts nearly broke, more and more of the federal transit program is at risk of not being funded. We urge that a permanent fix to this problem be found. Without financial stabilization for these accounts, many County Connection projects will be at risk.

### **Priority #2: Enact APTA's Recommendations on Mobility & Innovation**

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) have adopted a set of recommendations for federal enactment to promote and support innovative mobility solutions to increase the ability of all sorts of people to use public transportation throughout their everyday lives. These innovations in mobility must serve to improve and enhance traditional public transportation, not replace it. These innovations should also promote and provide opportunities to prepare the next generation of public transportation workers through work force development programs.

Many areas such as the one County Connection serves need to greatly improve their public transportation options to attack the housing crisis, climate change, equity, and aging population. However, historical growth patterns in these areas make traditional public challenging to provide. Thus, innovative mobility solutions are needed. They will also make established transit in these areas more effective and increase ridership.

Public transit agencies like County Connection are well positioned to deliver these innovative solutions along with their traditional fixed route services in an integrated and coordinated manner, if allowed to and supported by federal policy.

### **Priority #3: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**

County Connection depends on crucial federal funding to sustain essential programs like vehicle replacement, ADA paratransit, and lifeline services. With the IIJA set to expire in 2026, County Connection strongly advocates for a new surface transportation authorization that closely mirrors existing IIJA in both formula and discretionary funding levels, ensuring a robust funding platform that will support public transit.

# County Connection

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## **Priority #4: Community Project Funding for an Energy Efficient Storage System**

This project focuses on establishing essential infrastructure for energy storage, which will not only facilitate the transition to more efficient-running buses but also generate a significant cost savings. By enhancing the resilience of County Connection's infrastructure, we will provide a reliable backup power source for our fleet and create more local jobs in the future.