

HB23-1101 Ozone Season Transit Grant Program Flexibility

Monday, February 27, 2023

Senate Transportation & Energy 1:30 pm | SCR 352

Written Testimony: Support

Thank you Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee. My name is Summer Hill, and I am a government affairs manager at the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce and Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation.

I'm here today to express our organizations' support to House Bill 1101.

One of the Chamber's policy priorities this session is sustainability. We know that the only way to reach our state's environmental goals without compromising our affordability and economic competitiveness is through incentivizing the behavior we want to see rather than mandating it. This bill is a great example of that.

Free transit services proved to increase ridership, which had the additional benefits of making transit safer and restoring the vibrancy of commercial centers. As we strive to decongest our roads, retain public transit customers, and remedy the brown cloud, finding incentives to increase ridership are extremely important.

Eliminating cost-prohibitive barriers to public transportation increases ridership while also mitigating pollution by decreasing the number of commuters to and from our metro region. Further, the state's varied landscapes and populations mean that different communities have different transportation needs and ozone hazards. This bill creates necessary flexibility so that all communities can incentivize public transit respective to *their* environmental needs.

We urge the members of this committee to vote yes on this bill.