

# FY 2026 Summary of Public Comment Period for Proposed Fare and Service Changes

## Appendix: Testimony at Public Hearings

Planning and Development Division



Pittsburgh Regional Transit

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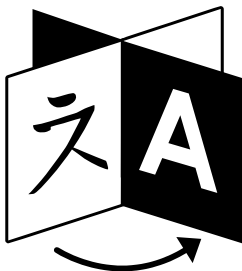


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## Translation?

¿Traducción? 需要翻譯?

ترجمة Traduzione? अनुवाद

**Customer Service 412.442.2000**

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# Testimony at Public Hearings

# Public Hearing 1

**Date: 4/29/2025**

**Location: Convention Center**

**Room: Main**

**Time: Morning**

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED  
SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND FARE INCREASE

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: LAURA SANTOS,  
Hearing Moderator  
Katherine Kelleman, Member  
Tom Burgunder, Member  
Lindsey Williams, Member  
Charles Reeves, Member  
Amy Silbermann, Member  
Donminika Brown, Member  
Don Rivetti, Member  
Jim Ritchie, Member  
Inez Colon, Member  
Mike Cetra, Member  
HEARING: Tuesday, April 29, 2025  
9:05 a.m.

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LOCATION: David L. Lawrence  
Convention Center  
Pittsburgh Ballroom  
3rd Floor  
1000 Ft. Duquesne Boulevard  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

WITNESSES: None offered

Reporter: Chelsea Curry

## A P P E A R A N C E S

ALSO PRESENT:

|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| DARCY CLEAVER         | ZANE AQRA         |
| BEN                   | ALEX ELLSWORTH    |
| ROXANNE HUBER         | RICHARD WALTER    |
| BENJAMIN JOHN CHISZAR |                   |
| DAVID HERZER          | STUART STRICKLAND |
| WYNDELL WILLIAMS      | MARLA BIRD        |
| NICK KYRIAZI          | CHASE             |
| CHRIS SANDVIG         | IKLAS DAVIS       |
| WILLIAM YOUNG         | NOAH SINDLER      |
| AUGUSTUS KNOX         | MARAH ALALI       |
| MARIA NAPOLITANO      | ANGELA WELCH      |
| NANCY WEHE            | OLIVIA SYLVESTER  |
| SONIA KAIL            | TERRY NEAL        |
| BRIAN HATGELAKAS      | ALICIA SALVADEO   |
| JOSIE BADGER          | KELLY TURK        |
| ALEXANDER MORRIS      | SHARON SAGE       |
| TRISTAN TURNER        | COLLEEN DEAROLF   |
| ROBERT FOWLER         | MADELYN GLYMOUR   |
| BILLY SU              | JEREMY SHAFFER    |
| ROSS MITCHELL         | COCOA LINDLEY     |
| VESHAE HARRIS         | NATE BUDZISZEWSKI |
| CAMERON TAYLOR        | CHRIS RIEGER      |



## A P P E A R A N C E S

ALSO PRESENT CONT.:

LEAH PARTRIDGE

AVONTAY JAMES

ANIYAH PETERS

JOSHUA MONTOYA

ZAHARA CHAPMAN

JENNIFER ENGLAND

KELDA GORMAN

LIBBY POWERS

KEVIN CASH

DAN TRACY

JAY WALKER

GIOVANNI MONTAGNINO

SHAWN PASTOR

## I N D E X

|                          |         |
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## E X H I B I T S

| <u>Number</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Page<br/>Offered</u> |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
|               | NONE OFFERED       |                         |

## P R O C E E D I N G S

-----

MS. KELLEMAN:

Good morning. Thank you, way in the back. Thank you very much. Good morning. My name is Katherine Kelleman for Pittsburgh Regional Transit. PRT is conducting this public hearing as part of a public comment period that began at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, March 31st, 2025. The period will conclude on Wednesday, June 18th, 2025 at 5:00 p.m., to receive public input on PRT's proposed funding crisis, related fare increases, and service reductions.

Before we begin to receive public comment, our hearing moderator, Laura Santos, will go over some housekeeping information. Okay, we don't have a mic.

MS. SANTOS:

Good morning, everyone. This hearing is being recorded and transcribed by a Court Reporter. If

1     you do not want to be recorded, we  
2     please ask that you exit the hearing  
3     room at this time. Please note that we  
4     have American Sign Language and Spanish  
5     language interpreters to provide  
6     translation services during the  
7     hearing. For participants who  
8     registered to provide public comment at  
9     today's hearing, you'll be called up to  
10    speak at your designated time, though  
11    you may be called up as much as 15  
12    minutes early to speak if there are no  
13    other speakers scheduled to speak. For  
14    participants who did not preregister,  
15    you have been placed into an open time  
16    slot to speak and will be called up to  
17    speak at your designated time, though  
18    you may also be called up as much as 15  
19    minutes early to speak if you - - - if  
20    there are no other speakers scheduled  
21    to speak.

22                   Each speaker will have  
23    three minutes to provide their public  
24    comment. When called upon, please  
25    clearly state your name and spell it

1 and then speak clearly. The hearing  
2 timekeeper will alert you when you have  
3 one minute remaining. If your three  
4 minutes is up and you want to provide  
5 further comment, you can do so via  
6 telephone, regular mail, or online  
7 until 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time  
8 on Wednesday, June 18th, 2025.

9 Additional details on these other  
10 methods to submit public comment to PRT  
11 regarding the proposed funding crisis  
12 related fiscal year 2026 fare increases  
13 and service reductions is available on  
14 PRT's website at

15 [www.rightprt.org/funding-crisis](http://www.rightprt.org/funding-crisis).

16 Speakers cannot donate or delegate  
17 their allotted time to another  
18 individual interested in speaking, but  
19 speakers may read in written comments  
20 they may have brought in with them on  
21 behalf of another individual during  
22 this scheduled comment time.

23 The purpose of this  
24 public hearing is for PRT to receive  
25 public comment only. Participating PRT

1 Board members and/or staff members will  
2 not respond to public comment provided  
3 during this hearing, but all comments  
4 will be recorded and analyzed as part  
5 of the public comment collection  
6 process.

7 Additionally, there's an  
8 information table set up outside the  
9 hearing room where there are PRT staff  
10 that can answer questions. Both PRT  
11 Board members and senior management  
12 will be listening to public comments  
13 during this public hearing. At this  
14 time, I would ask PRT Board members who  
15 are in attendance to identify  
16 themselves.

17 MR. BURGUNDER:

18 Tom Burgunder.

19 SENATOR WILLIAMS:

20 Senator Lindsey Williams.

21 MS. SANTOS:

22 Okay.

23 I will now ask PRT senior  
24 management who are in attendance to  
25 identify themselves.

1                   MR. REEVES:

2                   Charles Reeves.

3                   MS. KELLEMAN:

4                   Katherine Kelleman, CEO.

5                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

6                   Mike Cetra, Chief Legal  
7                   Officer.

8                   MS. SILBERMANN:

9                   Amy - - - Amy Silberman,  
10                  Chief Development Officer.

11                  MS. COLON:

12                  Inez Colon, Chief Human  
13                  Resources Officer.

14                  MR. RIVETTI:

15                  Don Rivetti, Chief  
16                  Maintenance Officer.

17                  MR. RITCHIE:

18                  Jim Ritchie, Chief  
19                  Communications Officer.

20                  MS. SANTOS:

21                  Okay.

22                  This public hearing was  
23                  scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.,  
24                  and 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a two  
25                  hour break from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.,



1 and PRT intends to conduct a public  
2 hearing for the entire advertised time  
3 periods to ensure members of the public  
4 who did not preregister but appear  
5 today and sign up to speak have an  
6 opportunity to do so. Thank you.

7 MS. KELLEMAN:

8 Thank you, Laura.

9 Absent additional state  
10 funding, PRT is facing an operating  
11 budget deficit of approximately \$100  
12 million in fiscal year 2026. PRT is  
13 required by law to pass a balanced  
14 budget, and with so many fixed costs,  
15 we are proposing a 35 percent reduction  
16 in bus, light rail, and incline  
17 services. If approved by PRT's Board,  
18 these changes would begin with PRT's  
19 February 2026 service adjustments along  
20 with the \$0.25 cent fare increase.

21 Additionally, due to the  
22 severity of the budget deficit,  
23 corresponding reductions to service  
24 levels and increases in fares are also  
25 being proposed for PRT's sponsored

1 paratransit program ACCESS. This  
2 program provides demand response  
3 transportation services for eligible  
4 individuals with disabilities and  
5 senior citizens in Allegheny County.  
6 And today, we are joined by Karen  
7 Hoesch from ACCESS. Good Morning,  
8 Karen.

9 A summary of the proposed  
10 funding crisis related fiscal '26 fare  
11 increases and service reductions is  
12 provided below, and with --- and  
13 additional information is available on  
14 PRT's website at  
15 [www.rideprt.org/fundingcrisis](http://www.rideprt.org/fundingcrisis).

16 We will now begin to hear  
17 public --- to receive public comment.

18 MS. SANTOS:

19 The first speaker is  
20 Lloyd Knight. Knight, are you here  
21 today again? Again, that is Lloyd  
22 Knight. Okay.

23 We will move on to the  
24 next scheduled speaker, Stefan Wuchana  
25 (phonetic). Okay.

1 Moving on to the next  
2 speaker, Mark A. Schramm. All right.  
3 Okay.

4 Moving on, Roxanne Huber.  
5 Okay, thank you. You will have three  
6 minutes to speak, and we will let you  
7 know when you have one minute  
8 remaining. Thank you.

9 MS. HUBER:

10 Can you all hear me?

11 MS. SANTOS:

12 Yes.

13 MS. HUBER:

14 Okay.

15 So, my name is Roxanne  
16 Huber. To spell that for the record,  
17 it's R-O-X-A-N-N-E H-U-B-E-R.

18 So first off, I know you  
19 guys know how important public transit  
20 is, so thank you for taking this time  
21 to listen to the public today. So a  
22 little bit more about myself. I work  
23 with the Teen Outreach to Promote  
24 Safety, or TOPS program. We work with  
25 three pediatric forensic psych clinics,

1 Juvenile Probation, and Children Youth  
2 and Family Services. Together, all of  
3 us serve those in a community that most  
4 community organizations don't want to  
5 work with, are marginalized, and live  
6 in lower socioeconomic statuses.

7 When I first heard of the  
8 proposed funding crisis and the  
9 proposed budget cuts, my first thought  
10 did not go to my use of public transit,  
11 but to the clients that we serve. And  
12 as I looked further into the proposed  
13 budget cuts and transit cuts, I saw  
14 that there was going to be an immediate  
15 concern because public transit is  
16 essential for our families due to the  
17 inaccessibility to telehealth and the  
18 inability to benefit from telehealth  
19 and the in person requirements that  
20 they have.

21 If transit is cut and  
22 these people who cannot use telehealth  
23 cannot complete treatment, they will  
24 land in residential facilities, which  
25 leads to increased trauma, separated

1 families, continued generational  
2 struggles, and higher state costs in  
3 general as outpatient treatments are  
4 more successful and more cost effective  
5 in that capacity.

6 From there, I think of  
7 our community's impact. If transit is  
8 cut, people are going to lose their  
9 jobs because they use transit to get to  
10 those jobs, which adds unnecessary  
11 costs to our already struggling  
12 economy, which I know all of you are  
13 feeling. In turn, people are also  
14 going to miss essential preventative  
15 medical appointments such as dental  
16 hygiene appointments and their yearly  
17 checkup and screenings. In turn, this  
18 is going to create worse health  
19 outcomes and apply more pressure to a  
20 collapsing medical system.

21 On a more positive note,  
22 public transit reduces our carbon  
23 footprint in general, which provides  
24 cleaner air, lets more people be  
25 outside and in our communities, and it

1 helps prevent an environmental  
2 catastrophe that we are running into.  
3 In general, as you know, public transit  
4 makes the world accessible and is  
5 essential for all people. Reducing the  
6 routes that are being proposed or  
7 removing them from the budget is going  
8 to be detrimental to our clients, our  
9 clinics, and our society.

10 So with this in mind, as  
11 you guys are already doing, please keep  
12 advocating for your budget, and I do  
13 urge you to consider revamping your bus  
14 routes to continue making public  
15 transit equitable for all. Thank you  
16 so much.

17 MS. SANTOS:

18 Thank you.

19 MR. BURGUNDER:

20 Thank you.

21 MS. SANTOS:

22 Next speaker is Nicholas  
23 Kyriazi. Again, that is Nicholas  
24 Kyriazi. Gabrielle Green. Okay.  
25 Again, Gabrielle Green. Valerie Smith.

1 Benjamin John Chiszar.

2 Okay, thank you. Again, you have three  
3 minutes to speak and we'll let you know  
4 when you have one minute remaining.

5 MR. CHISZAR:

6 Benjamin John Chiszar.

7 Transit is life.

8 Personal mobility is freedom. Public  
9 transit should be seen as a public  
10 good. All public transit should be  
11 free. Fares are user fees for a system  
12 we already paid for. This constitutes  
13 double taxation. As a veteran of the  
14 elite military intelligence corps, this  
15 will not stand with me.

16 The cost for transit  
17 should be borne by government revenues,  
18 not the riders. A dedicated transit  
19 sales tax would make the most sense.  
20 If public transit was free and  
21 efficient, more people would use it.

22 PRT is an embarrassment.  
23 An expensive embarrassment. There's a  
24 reason why more people don't use it.  
25 They don't want to. It's slow and

1 inefficient. The bus stops are worse  
2 than a third world country. The  
3 vehicles are too large and expensive.  
4 Why pay more?

5 And let us agree on a  
6 harsh standard on ridership. All  
7 routes less than half full for more  
8 than half the day should be terminated.  
9 By such a harsh standard, most of the  
10 routes will be closed tomorrow. The  
11 fleecing of the taxpayers must stop.  
12 And as proof, nobody uses PRT.

13 So why are we really here  
14 today? Because of failed leadership  
15 and gross mismanagement? We just  
16 raised taxes 40 percent on everyone in  
17 the county. Now PRT needs a bailout?  
18 When you already waste \$500 million a  
19 year? Now you have a \$100 million  
20 deficit? Most of the money goes to  
21 staff, not the riders. Why don't you  
22 cut salaries and benefits? I hope the  
23 entire leadership team has resigned in  
24 shame.

25 Harrisburg? That's who



1     you're counting on? The do nothing  
2     legislature and the worthless governor  
3     who the media seems to be in love with?  
4     They don't care about PRT. They're  
5     just going to point to the ridership.  
6     Where are all the loud, white  
7     progressives who care about the  
8     environment? Why aren't they using the  
9     system? Because they don't want to, or  
10    have to. They like their cars and  
11    their all white neighborhoods even  
12    though many of the older neighborhoods  
13    lack parking infrastructure for every  
14    domicile to have a vehicle. And  
15    everyone in this community knows it.

16                 I believe we can  
17    dramatically increase ridership by  
18    banning on street parking in the  
19    densely populated neighborhoods.  
20    Banning driver's licenses for  
21    foreigners. And if we really want to  
22    be evil, let's ban all school buses,  
23    forcing kids as young as five to  
24    navigate PRT.

25                 We could provide

1 alternative transportation to all those  
2 low income who rely on PRT via private  
3 drivers and jitney vans and still save  
4 money. I believe we should put a sales  
5 tax on all sin, alcohol, marijuana,  
6 gambling, tobacco, meat, sugar, salt,  
7 processed food to fund roads, bridges,  
8 sidewalks, and public transit.

9 Make the system free. It  
10 will be good for the economy. Do not  
11 raise the fares. Shame on PRT for  
12 raising fares on the backs of the  
13 poorest amongst us. Thank you kindly.  
14 May God bless Allegheny County and all  
15 who call her home.

16 MS. SANTOS:

17 Thank you. Thank you.  
18 The next speaker is Maria Napolitano.  
19 Maria Napolitano? Next speaker, Chris  
20 Sandvig. All right. Okay.

21 We're going to hold off  
22 on the next speakers. The next one,  
23 it's at 10:00 in the morning. All  
24 right.

25 If there's anyone in the

1 room that would like to speak, but  
2 hasn't signed up to speak, you can sign  
3 up in the back in --- in the desks that  
4 are out in the lobby. You can sign up  
5 there, or to speak earlier. Also, if  
6 anyone arrived late to their scheduled  
7 time, but was scheduled to talk between  
8 9:00 to 10:00 in the morning, you can  
9 please raise your hand and I can ---  
10 can let me know what your name is.  
11 Yes, what is your name?

12 MR. HERZER:

13 David Herzer.

14 MS. SANTOS:

15 David Herzer, okay.

16 I don't have you  
17 scheduled from 9:00 to 10:00, but could  
18 we ask you to --- to go schedule  
19 yourself to --- to speak?

20 MR. HERZER:

21 Sure.

22 MS. SANTOS:

23 Okay.

24 Thank you. Yeah, I think  
25 they want them to register. Okay.

1                   MS. KELLEMAN:

2                   So confirming that the  
3                   moderator will be announcing. Anyone  
4                   who's here who would like to speak now,  
5                   we'd like to ask you to register, but  
6                   then you're more than welcome to come  
7                   speak. So register outside and come  
8                   back and talk to us.

9                   MS. SANTOS:

10                  Thank you. Can you state  
11                  your name for the record? And you have  
12                  three minutes to speak, and we'll let  
13                  you know when you have one minute  
14                  remaining.

15                  MR. HERZER:

16                  David Herzer.

17                  MS. SANTOS:

18                  David Herzer, okay.

19                  MR. HERZER:

20                  Thank you for letting me  
21                  speak today. I'd like to speak on  
22                  behalf of those who work at the Amazon  
23                  Sort Center out in Crafton. Many of  
24                  them rely on transit. At present, I  
25                  have three buses that I can use. The

1 29, the 27, and the 26. Soon, it's  
2 going to be just the 27.

3 That is ridiculous. And  
4 not only that, but there are a lot of  
5 elderly people who can't even drive to  
6 begin with. There are people on  
7 wheelchairs. Access costs a fortune,  
8 and soon the buses are going to be too  
9 darn crowded to put the wheelchairs on  
10 to begin with. I've already seen it.  
11 Drivers can't put them on because the  
12 front part's too crowded. That is  
13 absurd. That is the most ridiculous  
14 thing I've ever seen in my life.

15 How can you possibly take  
16 it out on us? This is ridiculous.  
17 What kind of excuse do you people have  
18 for this? And let's tell the people in  
19 Harrisburg that the voters are a lot  
20 like elephants. They have long  
21 memories, and they better not be  
22 running for incumbency because they're  
23 going to remember and they're going to  
24 get rid of the people who tried to pass  
25 this garbage and they're going to put

1       somebody in who's going to finally fix  
2       it.

3                       And not only that, the  
4       buses, like I said, are going to be a  
5       lot more crowded. They're going to run  
6       a lot less often, too. So if I miss  
7       one, it's probably going to be an hour  
8       before the next one comes. That's  
9       ridiculous. And cab fare is  
10      unbelievable. Even just to get to  
11      downtown to the Sorts Center costs  
12      almost \$20, and that's without tip.  
13      And 29 is the one that's supposed to be  
14      cut, correct? Guess what? There's a  
15      lot of people who have to go out to the  
16      --- the CCAC out there. Do you have  
17      any idea how much a cab fare's going to  
18      be just to get out there to begin with?  
19      And you want these people to do this,  
20      what? Five days a week?

21                      Sorry, that's  
22      inexcusable. That's unacceptable.  
23      Thank you.

24                      MS. SANTOS:

25                      Thank you for speaking.

1                   MR. BURGUNDER:

2                   Why don't we give it five  
3 minutes or so and see if somebody shows  
4 up? And then we can.

5                   MS. SANTOS:

6                   Anyone in the room  
7 registered to speak and would like to  
8 speak earlier? Okay.

9                   Thank you. You have  
10 three minutes to speak, and we'll let  
11 you know when you have one minute to  
12 speak. Thank you. Okay.

13                   MR. WILLIAMS:

14                   Greetings board. My name  
15 is Wyndell Williams. I'm representing  
16 the riders of the 52 --- 52L Homeville,  
17 53 Lincoln Place, 14 Ohio River ---  
18 Ohio Valley, the 012 McKnight Road, and  
19 the two, the Mount Royal.

20                   Those buses are planned  
21 to be cut off. You're leaving complete  
22 bus deserts. Allegheny County was ---  
23 came out with a clean air report the  
24 other week. We have bad air. You're  
25 going to be putting more cars on the

1 bus. I mean on the road, less buses.  
2 How's that going to settle this?  
3 You're leaving bus deserts.

4 Saturdays, my bus doesn't  
5 run. I have to walk two miles to  
6 Homestead to catch a 53. You're  
7 cutting my bus off, so I'm going to be  
8 --- I'll have to do that with a couple  
9 other people.

10 A lot of people work  
11 depending on PAT Transit. Some of them  
12 do have cars. They choose to ride the  
13 bus because it's more efficient and  
14 it's more cost efficient for them. Now  
15 you're going to --- again, you'll be  
16 putting more cars on the road, more  
17 stress on our bridges. Bad enough we  
18 had a bridge collapse a couple years  
19 ago in --- over in the park over there.  
20 We got a couple bridges you can't even  
21 drive across right now.

22 Buses made it easier for  
23 people to get to work. I've been  
24 riding PAT bus, PAT buses, PRT buses  
25 since 1973 when I was 13 years old.



1 I've seen routes cut. Nothing added.  
2 Everything is cut. I've seen pay - - -  
3 I've seen fares go up. Realistically,  
4 hey, that's the cost of doing business  
5 a lot of time with fares going up. But  
6 to just eliminate a lot of buses,  
7 you're going to hurt elderly people who  
8 need to get on buses to go to the  
9 supermarket, especially to the  
10 waterfront down at Homestead where I do  
11 a lot of my shopping and I see a lot of  
12 elderly people getting on a bus for  
13 that.

14 I mean, where do we go  
15 from here? You're depending on  
16 Harrisburg. Guess what? All of  
17 Harrisburg's money is going to  
18 Philadelphia, which it always has been  
19 going to Philadelphia. Nothing has  
20 changed in this state. Guys, and I  
21 have. I called my state representative  
22 and state senator. They need to get  
23 off their butts and find a good  
24 solution for this because there's a lot  
25 of people who depend on buses and some

1 don't have cars. So now, they're going  
2 to be unemployed. And guess what? No  
3 jobs are coming into Allegheny County.  
4 I don't see them. None are coming into  
5 Pittsburgh. I don't see them. We  
6 better hold on to what we have, or  
7 guess what? We'll become a big ghetto.  
8 Worse than Detroit without this public  
9 transportation.

10 Thank you very much. I  
11 appreciate you guys for listening to  
12 me, and have a good day.

13 MS. SANTOS:

14 Thank you for speaking.  
15 Is there anyone else that was scheduled  
16 to speak that would like to go ahead?  
17 Thank you. Yes. Okay, yes.

18 What is your name? Okay.  
19 Okay. Thank you, Nick. You can go  
20 ahead and speak now. You have three  
21 minutes to speak, and we'll let you  
22 know when you have one minute  
23 remaining.

24 MR. KYRIAZI:

25 My name's Nick Kyriazi.

1 I have lived on the north side since  
2 1976. I moved to the north side so I  
3 would not need to own a car. I have  
4 used public transit my entire working  
5 life, including 37 years of taking the  
6 46D Curry to the Bruceton Research  
7 Center in South Park Township.

8 Now retired, I take PRT  
9 vehicles for free. I am also a  
10 libertarian, and I feel guilty that  
11 even when I was paying for my annual  
12 transit passes, I was not paying the  
13 full cost of the, my transportation.

14 When PRT gets money from  
15 state government, that means that  
16 taxpayers in Franklin, Pennsylvania,  
17 are forced to pay for my transportation  
18 needs. I don't think that's right.  
19 And I --- I'm wondering, why is local  
20 public transit anything but a local  
21 issue?

22 I suggest that PRT begin  
23 charging the true cost for  
24 transportation. Some riders can afford  
25 it. I'm sure it's cheaper than owning

1 a car. And for those who can't, I  
2 suggest creating a charitable  
3 organizational fund that low income  
4 people can apply to for their transit  
5 needs. As evidenced by the mainly go  
6 --- the many go fund me appeals, there  
7 are many people anxious to help others  
8 who have financial need. That way, no  
9 coercion is involved in providing  
10 transit for Pittsburgh.

11 And while I'm here and  
12 you're here, I wanted to suggest that  
13 in the summer when it's 90 degrees  
14 outside and we're all walking around in  
15 sandals and shorts and you get on a bus  
16 and it's 64 degrees, I'm wondering who  
17 sets these temperatures and why?  
18 Because it's, you have to carry a light  
19 jacket with you at all times if you  
20 want to ride a bus.

21 MS. SANTOS:

22 Thank you for speaking.  
23 Is there anyone here that was scheduled  
24 to speak between 9:00 to 10:00 that  
25 would like to speak now? Thank you.

1        lease state your name. You have three  
2        minutes to speak, and we'll let you  
3        know when you have one minute  
4        remaining.

5                                MS. HARTZELL:

6                                My name is Megan  
7        Hartzell. Good morning. I have been a  
8        transit rider for as long as I can  
9        remember, and I've relied on using  
10       public transit to commute to work since  
11       high school.

12                               We live in the second  
13       largest metropolitan area in the state,  
14       and it's a shame that we have to beg  
15       our government to help fund our transit  
16       system. Public transit is a right for  
17       every citizen. We should be able to  
18       use it to get to work, for grocery  
19       shopping, and for going out on the  
20       weekends. Many of the riders that use  
21       public transit use it to commute  
22       downtown to work. I am one of those  
23       riders. I cannot afford to pay \$300 a  
24       month to park downtown and then \$30  
25       every week for gas for the commute.

1 And quite frankly, I don't want to. I  
2 like being able to relax on my way to  
3 and from work. I like not having to  
4 worry about the traffic and the extra  
5 wear and tear on a car.

6 Decreasing public transit  
7 means more people may start driving  
8 into town to work, which means more  
9 inexperienced drivers will be driving  
10 into town to work, which will cause an  
11 increase in traffic and an increase in  
12 accidents.

13 Almost all of the South  
14 Hills routes are being eliminated. One  
15 of those routes being eliminated is the  
16 39 Brookline. This bus is always  
17 packed, and PRT is doing these  
18 residents at vast disservice in  
19 eliminating the route. Not everyone in  
20 Brookline can walk to McNeilly Station,  
21 South Bank, or Potomac to get to T. So  
22 what are these residents supposed to  
23 do? Can any of you answer me that?

24 You cannot expect  
25 residents to have to walk a mile to get

1 a bus, especially if that walk includes  
2 a lot of hills and no sidewalks. That  
3 can be dangerous for residents to have  
4 to walk on the side of Pioneer Avenue  
5 to get to the south busway in the  
6 morning to get a bus.

7 With service being cut at  
8 11:00 p.m. for all routes, how will  
9 individuals like nurses working the  
10 night shift get to or from work? How  
11 will individuals who go out on the  
12 north side get home after a night out  
13 from a concert with no service past  
14 11:00 p.m.? What about a late Penguin  
15 or Steeler game with no service past  
16 11:00 p.m.? What about when the city  
17 hosts a draft next year? What are we  
18 going to do with no service past 11:00  
19 p.m.? This will hurt the service  
20 economy downtown and the north side  
21 because individuals will be able to get  
22 down there, but not home. And not  
23 everyone wants to or can afford to pay  
24 a surge priced to Uber after a game or  
25 a concert or just a night out on the

1 weekend. Less people going to these  
2 areas means less money going to those  
3 restaurants.

4 With the increase in fare  
5 price, we will have the fifth highest  
6 fares in the nation, and for what?  
7 There will hardly be any service. Yet,  
8 routes are not being cut on buses that  
9 will use the University line to go out  
10 to Oakland. But almost all public  
11 transit is being cut in the South  
12 Hills.

13 PRT keeps saying this is  
14 a funding deficit that was a long time  
15 coming. So was this project really  
16 needed? Is it really going to save  
17 time to get to Oakland?

18 Why is the CEO getting a  
19 bonus more than my yearly salary during  
20 a funding crisis? Why are there signs  
21 saying that they're hiring drivers when  
22 in a few months, most of these routes  
23 are getting eliminated or reduced?  
24 There is no fiscal accountability and  
25 no forward thinking at PRT to avoid



1 this problem that they knew was coming.  
2 They are relying on residents to help  
3 save it, and that's not fair.

4 MS. SANTOS:

5 Thank you for speaking.

6 Is there anyone  
7 registered - - - registered to speak that  
8 would like to go earlier than their  
9 registered time? Thank you. Please  
10 state your name, and you will have  
11 three minutes, and we'll let you know  
12 when you have one minute remaining.

13 MR. SANDVIG:

14 Thank you. Good morning,  
15 Chris Sandvig. Good to see you all  
16 today. I am the Founder and Executive  
17 Director of Mobilify Southwestern  
18 Pennsylvania. I'm also a proud regular  
19 rider of PRT for well over a decade.

20 I'll leave it to others  
21 to talk about their particular routes,  
22 their time of day, that sort of thing.  
23 I am a proud rider of the 87, 75, P1,  
24 28X, 71A, B, C, and so I have a bit of  
25 experience with the system.

1 I am also a veteran  
2 leader of transit funding crisis fights  
3 past. And while Act 89 was monumental,  
4 all of us back then knew that its shelf  
5 life was about ten years. Even so, I  
6 have to say, this current fiscal cliff  
7 scares me more than that one did. The  
8 cuts that PRT is forced to propose  
9 aren't just another roadblock to our  
10 economy's - - - region's economic  
11 recovery. They send us backwards, and  
12 we least can afford it.

13 Sustainable long term  
14 investment in public transit is  
15 essential to ensure our region remains  
16 accessible and equitable for all, to  
17 say nothing of remaining economically  
18 viable and competitive on the world  
19 stage.

20 The coalition that I co-  
21 led culminated in Act 89, the landmark  
22 legislation that saved PA transit, and  
23 our roads and bridges. We all knew  
24 back then that the law had a ten year  
25 shelf life. Many of us, including PRT,

1 rang this alarm in 2019. We've made it  
2 four years longer than expected, and  
3 PRT should be commended for its fiscal  
4 stewardship and rewarded for it.  
5 Except it, and we, face the opposite.

6                   These financial decisions  
7 do have real world consequences.  
8 People are not parcels. Employers,  
9 doctors, and many others can't just  
10 wait a little longer for folks to show  
11 up like they would their Amazon order.  
12 Our most vulnerable neighbors rely on  
13 transit to get and keep that job, make  
14 it to the doctor and grocery store,  
15 visit friends and family, and basically  
16 have a meaningful, dignified life that  
17 supports the lives of people like me  
18 and you.

19                   I want to be very clear.  
20 While not quite on par with the  
21 collapse of steel, the collapse of  
22 transit will be disastrous for the  
23 Pittsburgh region. Workers and  
24 employers alike in all sectors seek out  
25 places that invest in transit. Will

1       they come? Would they stay? Would  
2       your kids want to live in that kind of  
3       Pittsburgh, and would you? I don't see  
4       this as hyperbole, personally.

5               Act 89 was passed with a  
6       Republican House, Republican Senate,  
7       and a Republican Governor. Cities in  
8       progressive states like Utah,  
9       Tennessee, and Ohio are investing in  
10      more transit, more active  
11      transportation, more economic  
12      opportunity and growth. Here in  
13      Pennsylvania, we've been --- we're ---  
14      we're hanging on by our fingernails and  
15      continually falling behind. We can  
16      talk all we want about reforms that are  
17      likely necessary, but at the end of the  
18      day, we still need buses and trains,  
19      more of them, not less.

20             We can do our part, but  
21      it's time for Harrisburg to put forth a  
22      real funding package, not a month's  
23      allowance, and keep Pennsylvania moving  
24      for good this time. More transit, not  
25      less. Thank you.

1                   MS. SANTOS:

2                   Thank you for speaking.

3                   The next speaker is  
4 William Young. Please state your name.  
5 You will have three minutes to speak,  
6 and we'll let you know when you have  
7 one minute remaining.

8                   MS. YOUNG:

9                   Thank you. My name is  
10 William Young. I've been coming to the  
11 past few Board meetings. All good to  
12 see you again. But as you've said,  
13 Katherine, the time for talk and empty  
14 promises is over. Harrisburg needs to  
15 step up and do their job or we, the  
16 voters, will vote you out.

17                   And the time for action  
18 is now. We need our public transit,  
19 more of it, not less. We have these  
20 big plans for the NFL draft next year,  
21 and we need transit to get these fans,  
22 people to where they need to go,  
23 whether it be Acrisure Stadium, PNC  
24 Park, the North Shore, Point State  
25 Park, all of our many attractions.

1 I work with the Pirates  
2 and Acrisure Stadium, and I don't even  
3 know how I'm even going to get home in  
4 Sheridan without the Route 26. The G2  
5 will still be around, the 27 will still  
6 be around. And I must commend all of  
7 the Board members. Katherine, I have  
8 to commend you for your stewardship of  
9 our tax dollars and thank you.  
10 Therefore, I yield my time.

11 MS. SANTOS:

12 Thank you for speaking.  
13 The next speaker is Augustus Knox. If  
14 you're not registered to speak, but you  
15 would like to speak, we'll --- we'll  
16 take your testimony.

17 MR. KNOX:

18 How y'all doing?

19 MS. SANTOS:

20 You'll have ---.

21 MR. KNOX:

22 How y'all doing? Yeah, I  
23 hope the state give them its money  
24 about these buses. Let this money go.  
25 I hope the state give them its money.

1 We got to keep these buses - - - got to  
2 keep these buses rolling. We - - - we  
3 need them. We need these buses bad.  
4 We need them.

5 I hope the state let that  
6 money go. Don't - - - let the money go  
7 - - - state give them its money and let  
8 this money go. The state give them its  
9 money, I don't know how much, and we  
10 can keep these buses rolling. Yeah, we  
11 got to keep - - - we need them. We need  
12 these buses bad. We need them. We  
13 need these buses bad. We need them.  
14 Thank you.

15 MS. SANTOS:

16 Thank you for speaking.

17 MR. KNOX:

18 My name is Augustus Knox.  
19 My name is Augustus Knox. We need  
20 these buses bad. We need them bad.  
21 Augustus Knox. We need them. Thank  
22 you.

23 MS. SANTOS:

24 Thank you. If anyone  
25 registered to speak between 9:00 to

1 10:00, but didn't make it here earlier,  
2 please raise your hand and we'll take  
3 you now.

4 Thank you. You can walk  
5 to the podium. Please state your name.  
6 You'll have three minutes to speak, and  
7 we'll let you know when you have one  
8 minute remaining.

9 MS. NAPOLITANO:

10 My name is Maria  
11 Napolitano. I am the Council President  
12 from the Borough of Leetsdale, and I  
13 would like to convey to you the  
14 importance of PRT Line 14 for our  
15 community.

16 Leetsdale is a small  
17 municipality of about 1,162 residents.  
18 We are located in the northwest suburb  
19 of Pittsburgh at the very edge of  
20 Allegheny County, bordering Beaver  
21 County. In my community, pretty much  
22 everybody who makes a wage commutes to  
23 Pittsburgh. And of those people, 25 to  
24 50 percent, according to our  
25 comprehensive planning studies, use



1 public transportation, many on a  
2 regular basis. And those include my  
3 own daughter, actually. So these  
4 people choose to move to Leetsdale to  
5 be able to access the bus line so they  
6 could make a living.

7 Public transport also is  
8 important for over 2,000 people who  
9 commute to work at the Leetsdale  
10 Industrial Park, which is home to a  
11 variety of industries. Many companies  
12 there give special opportunities to  
13 people who fell on hard times and maybe  
14 cannot obtain a driver's license or  
15 pass background checks. We know for  
16 sure that those workers commute on line  
17 14, disembark on Beaver Street, and  
18 walk down to the industrial park so  
19 they can make an honest living.

20 And finally, the elderly.  
21 Every fourth household in Leetsdale has  
22 an elderly living alone. Many of them  
23 do not drive, over --- but about 160  
24 people in Leetsdale are disabled. And  
25 those include mobility challenges,

1 visual challenges. Many of those  
2 residents reside in Leetsdale Manor,  
3 low income high rise. And those are  
4 the residents that I see on a regular  
5 basis throughout the day taking a bus  
6 to access the necessities of their  
7 daily living. Going to grocery store,  
8 going to farmer's market, going to the  
9 library, going to doctor's  
10 appointments, visiting family which  
11 lives in a neighborhood.

12 Again, this is a big  
13 reason why the elderly choose to stay  
14 in Leetsdale and move to Leetsdale to  
15 be closer to their families in the area  
16 or stay in Leetsdale to age in place  
17 the access to public transportation.

18 I'd like to emphasize  
19 that we are the community that is  
20 farthest away on this line in Allegheny  
21 County. Beaver County, just a little  
22 bit out, has their own bus service. We  
23 will not if our --- this line number 14  
24 is impacted. I very, very strongly  
25 urge you to consider the importance of

1 line 14 specifically for the northwest  
2 edges of Allegheny County. I know you  
3 have to - - - you are facing tough  
4 decisions, but please understand how  
5 important this line is for our  
6 community and it will devastate the  
7 community and remove many reasons for  
8 people to actually live in my small  
9 town if this line is - - - if line is not  
10 available.

11 You know, creating  
12 downstream impacts which is honestly  
13 hard to comprehend at this time. As  
14 we're looking at the state of our, you  
15 know, local tax base, the state of our  
16 revitalization of our properties, the  
17 state of community spirit in my town.  
18 Honestly, it's hard to complicate - - -  
19 to comprehend the possible impacts.  
20 Please consider keeping line 14 and  
21 serving our area. Thank you very much.

22 MS. SANTOS:

23 Thank you for speaking.

24 Is there anyone else  
25 scheduled from 9:00 to 10:00 that would

1       like to speak now?   Okay.

2                       Anyone scheduled to speak  
3       today that would like to go earlier?  
4       You can raise your hand and you can  
5       walk towards the podium.   Thank you.  
6       Yeah.   Please state your name, and  
7       you'll have three minutes to speak and  
8       we'll let you know when you have one  
9       minute remaining.

10                      MS. WEHE:

11                      My name is Nancy Wehe, N-  
12       A-N-C-Y.   Last name W-E-H-E.

13                      I enjoy riding the PRT  
14       buses, and sometimes I have an app on  
15       my cell phone that I use and it tells  
16       me what time the buses are coming.   And  
17       I enjoy riding the bus.   Even though  
18       you have to wait, but I don't know,  
19       because I take the 86 --- I live in  
20       Bloomfield.   I take the 86 to shopping.  
21       I --- I take the 54C Charlie bus to the  
22       --- to the Wilson's drugstore.   And I  
23       don't know if that's going to be  
24       affected, of the 86 or the 54C.   I  
25       don't know if those routes are going to

1 be a little later in time. If I have  
2 to wait longer for those buses. I am  
3 not sure because I didn't hear much  
4 about it, so.

5 But I enjoy taking the  
6 bus and the bus drivers are so nice.  
7 You know, they're very helpful. And I  
8 said, are you stopping it? You know,  
9 so and so. Like, one day I had left my  
10 bag on the bus, and it was so nice.  
11 The dispatcher had paged the 54C. And  
12 --- and I waited, they said in a couple  
13 hours. But I was very patient about  
14 it, and they gave me the bus number and  
15 I recommend they, in my --- they ---  
16 the driver had got my bag, I left  
17 groceries and that was so nice.

18 I --- but I enjoy, even  
19 though if the time's going to be less,  
20 but I still --- I still enjoy taking  
21 the bus. Because the bus drivers are  
22 so nice, and I wanted to state that  
23 they're very generous.

24 But I think that's all I  
25 have to say. Thank you very much for

1       letting me speak. Bye bye, I'll.

2                   MS. SANTOS:

3                   Thank you for speaking.

4                   Anyone else registered to  
5 speak that would like to go earlier?

6       Okay, thank you. We are still taking  
7 people to register to speak. So if  
8 you're here today and have not  
9 registered, you can do so at one of the  
10 tables in the lobby.

11                   Sonia, next speaker.  
12 Please state your name. You'll have  
13 three minutes to speak, and we'll let  
14 you know when you have one minute  
15 remaining.

16                   MS. KAIL:

17                   Right here?

18                   MS. SANTOS:

19                   The podium, thank you.

20                   MS. KAIL:

21                   Hi. I'm Sonia Kail. I  
22 live in Mount Lebanon, and nice to meet  
23 everybody.

24                   The 41 Bower Hill, the 38  
25 Green Tree says eliminated. I depend

1 on a few of those buses to get to work.  
2 I have no other way to get to work. I  
3 got no family. I got no friends. This  
4 will take a major impact in my life.

5 It deeply affects me. It  
6 really does. Please don't cut these  
7 buses. How would a person like me and  
8 other people who work - - - who work  
9 along those, like, on Bower Hill Road,  
10 like at the hospital in Asbury Heights,  
11 Kane Center. How would all those  
12 people get to work? They'll be  
13 impacted, too. We need these buses in  
14 the South Hills.

15 This is very shocking. I  
16 don't understand how you can all do  
17 this to us in the South Hills. I  
18 don't. It hurts. It hurts. I don't  
19 know what else to say, but please don't  
20 cut them or my life will be ruined. It  
21 will. I'm not going to go look for  
22 another job. I can't go look for  
23 another job. I can't. My job in  
24 Bridgeville, I love that job. It's the  
25 only job I know how to do. In this 31,

1 Bridgeville, I --- it'll be a very long  
2 way to get to work, and that's a major  
3 reduction. Please don't cut the 41 and  
4 the 38. I don't ride the 36. That's  
5 for other people, but don't cut those  
6 buses and let us suffer in the South  
7 Hills. Please don't. Thank you.

8 BEN:

9 Thank you, Sonia. We  
10 have Brian.

11 MR. HATGELAKAS:

12 I'm right here. You  
13 talking to me or? Hatgelakas?

14 BEN:

15 Yes, sir. Brian.

16 MR. HATGELAKAS:

17 Okay.

18 BEN:

19 Darcy will take your  
20 hand. You can have a seat.

21 MR. HATGELAKAS:

22 Could I leave my cane on  
23 my seat? I'll be listening to more,  
24 too. What's your name again, ma'am?

25 MS. CLEAVER:



1 Darcy.

2 MR. HATGELAKAS:

3 Thank you. Nice to meet  
4 you.

5 MS. CLEAVER:

6 Nice to meet you, too.  
7 Right here.

8 MR. HATGELAKAS:

9 Okay.

10 Hello. Good --- is this  
11 mic on? Yes. Hello, good morning. My  
12 name is Brian Hatgelakas. I live in  
13 the South Hills of Pittsburgh as well.  
14 And if --- if you do any cuts to the  
15 ACCESS system, that would be very  
16 devastating to me.

17 That would erase the  
18 independence that I learned as a kid,  
19 and it would erase basically a life.  
20 Also, I --- also, if you make us pay  
21 more for subpar service, that's not  
22 good either. I --- I know people who  
23 ride the 41 and 38 as well in my area.  
24 I --- I have a --- I have a friend that  
25 works downtown that uses the 41 and

1 relies on it to get to work. And her  
2 coworker also uses that as well. And  
3 they both have mobility issues,  
4 unfortunately. That where --- where  
5 it's hard for them to walk from, down  
6 to the trolley line at Dormont.

7 Please think of them when  
8 you're looking into all these cuts and  
9 stuff. For a city that's supposed to  
10 be on the rise and up and coming,  
11 service cuts, in my opinion, would make  
12 Pittsburgh sink way to the bottom and  
13 the whole State of Pennsylvania, for  
14 goodness sakes. PA needs to get with  
15 the times and expand service. Not cut.  
16 Because cutting service would --- would  
17 only force people out of Pennsylvania  
18 and out of Pittsburgh, and it would  
19 force people to look for other work in  
20 more expensive states.

21 Pittsburgh, come on  
22 Allegheny County, we're not like this.  
23 And PRT and Port Authority, we need to  
24 do what we need to do to get rolling  
25 with these things. So, I'm begging

1     you, please, please, please get some  
2     funding. Get Harrisburg to do their  
3     job and get some funding. Thank you  
4     very much, and hopefully everything's  
5     will work out. Thank you.

6                     BEN:

7                     Thank you. Thank you,  
8     Brian. Next up, we could have Josie  
9     Badger. Do we have Josie Badger?

10                    Amy Zaiss? Is Amy Zaiss?

11                    We'll take a small break  
12     until about 10:10 to give a couple  
13     people a chance to see if they show up  
14     so we don't get too far ahead. Thank  
15     you.

16                    - - -

17     (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS TAKEN  
18     DURING THE PROCEEDING.)

19                    - - -

20                    MODERATOR:

21                    Okay.

22                    We're going to go back on  
23     the record and resume receiving public  
24     comment.

25                    BEN:

1                   Thank you, everybody.  
2       We're going to resume comments with  
3       Josie Badger. Thank you, Josie. You  
4       will have three minutes. We will let  
5       you know when there is one minute  
6       remaining.

7                   AUDIENCE MEMBER:

8                   Mic assistance, please.

9                   MS. BADGER:

10                  Hi. Can you hear me?

11                  MS. KELLEMAN:

12                  Yes.

13                  MS. BADGER:

14                  Great. So good morning,  
15       friends. I am here today as Dr. Josie  
16       Badger, owner of J. Badger Consulting  
17       and PEACOCK Consulting Services.

18                  I was brought into this  
19       discussion because our business and my  
20       heart and family consists of people  
21       with disabilities. One in four  
22       individuals have a disability. And as  
23       both an individual who's had a  
24       disability and somebody that worked  
25       with young adults with disabilities, we

1 are constantly working to ensure that  
2 these individuals are able to get jobs.  
3 If you didn't know, Pennsylvania is an  
4 employment first state, and I am the  
5 chair of the Pennsylvania Employment  
6 First Oversight Commission.

7 And what that means is  
8 that Pennsylvania strives to make sure  
9 that the first option for folks with  
10 disabilities is paid, integrated  
11 employment. The only way that that is  
12 possible for a vast majority of  
13 individuals with disabilities is  
14 through public transportation. There  
15 was a recent report by Disability  
16 Rights Pennsylvania that stated that  
17 due to unreliable transportation, and  
18 that is when transportation's  
19 available, there was \$100 million of  
20 money lost in healthcare systems due to  
21 missing appointments.

22 When you're working with  
23 young adults with disabilities, you're  
24 thinking about how do we get this kid a  
25 job? How do we make sure that their

1 skills are built up? But without  
2 transportation, we're not even thinking  
3 that far down the road. We need to  
4 ensure that all individuals have the  
5 right to work, right to provide for  
6 their families, and right to live  
7 independently.

8 However, when the  
9 possibility of 62 percent of  
10 paratransit rides is on the cutting  
11 block, we know that these are pipe  
12 dreams. That we are setting ourselves  
13 back to the 1980s, before the ADA,  
14 before ADAPT, which was one of the  
15 major movements to get accessible  
16 transportation. We can't go backwards.

17 And so, I ask all of you  
18 to please help us protect paratransit  
19 and to protect the success and  
20 eliminate or limit the vulnerability of  
21 people with disabilities. We know when  
22 transportation's not available, we are  
23 not available. We are not at the  
24 table, and we are limiting our voice  
25 and our power. So please help us not

1 go backwards. Thank you.

2 BEN:

3 Thank you, Josie. Next,  
4 we would call Amy Zaiss. Do we have  
5 Amy here? Robin Strickler? Would  
6 Robin Strickler like to come up?  
7 Colleen Dearolf?

8 MS. KELLEMAN:

9 Brian, when is our next  
10 speaker registered? Or Ben, I should  
11 say. I'm sorry.

12 BEN:

13 Amy was at 10:15. Robin  
14 is at 10:20. Colleen was brought to me  
15 to put in when we had a spot here. I  
16 didn't want to get ahead of the time  
17 we're at.

18 MS. KELLEMAN:

19 That's okay. Do we have  
20 --- thank you, Ben. Do we have anyone  
21 else who is registered in the ten  
22 o'clock hour who would like to speak  
23 early? Are you with this big class? I  
24 want to hear all of you. You're all  
25 coming up for three minutes. Not

1 really, but we do want to hear from  
2 everybody. So why don't you come on up  
3 and tell us your name, sir?

4 BEN:

5 Come up. Please let  
6 everybody know what your name is.  
7 You'll have three minutes. We will let  
8 you know when you have one minute  
9 remaining.

10 MS. KELLEMAN:

11 And excuse me for going  
12 off script. For this big class, who  
13 has been to a public hearing before?  
14 Who has not? Oh, well, this looks  
15 exciting. Anyone who speaks to us,  
16 we're going to ask you to register so  
17 we can get your name and address, or  
18 --- you're going to give us your name  
19 when you come to talk. You get three  
20 minutes. It's not because we don't  
21 love you, but it's to make sure  
22 everybody gets time, okay? And if you  
23 have questions, just let us know.

24 And you are up, my  
25 friend. Give us your name and let's



1 talk. Your turn.

2 MR. MORRIS:

3 Okay.

4 Test, test. There we go.  
5 Hello. My name is Alexander Morris, A-  
6 L-E-X-A-N-D-E-R. Morris, common  
7 spelling. And I am a student at City  
8 Charter High School. And like many  
9 others in Pittsburgh, I rely on public  
10 transportation, sorry, every single day  
11 to get to school, go to work, and  
12 engage in all other sorts of  
13 activities.

14 And from what I  
15 understand, these proposed cuts to our  
16 transit system are largely due to a  
17 projected \$100 million deficit. But as  
18 I continued my research, I found  
19 something confusing and also  
20 concerning. At the same time that PRT  
21 is facing this crisis, parking rates  
22 downtown have gone up. Meter prices  
23 across the City have also increased,  
24 and bus fares expected to rise to \$3,  
25 making ours one of the most expensive

1 base fares in the entire country.

2 All this means one thing  
3 to me. People are being pushed out of  
4 public transit, and into their cars  
5 where they'll have no choice but to pay  
6 more. More for gas, more for parking,  
7 more just to live their lives in  
8 general. And while that may bring  
9 short term revenue to curb this issue,  
10 I have to ask, at what cost? And how  
11 long will this go on before we see  
12 things return to normal, if they ever  
13 do? Because the fact is that this  
14 situation isn't merely about budgets.  
15 It's about the people as well.  
16 Students like myself, teachers we have  
17 here, elderly, workers, lower income  
18 residents, people who don't have  
19 another option. People who feel like  
20 they're being left behind by decisions  
21 they have little to no voice in.

22 I'm not here just to  
23 raise concerns, though. I am here to  
24 ask for alternatives. Can we look to  
25 contributions from large profit - - -

1 large nonprofits, sorry, or fair  
2 taxation on things such as vacant land  
3 and luxury developments? Can we  
4 consider how to make the burden more  
5 equitable instead of putting it on  
6 those with the least?

7                   Seeing as Mayor Gainey  
8 often --- often mentions investing into  
9 the future, be that through plans of  
10 the --- plans through the younger  
11 generation or his own, it'd be  
12 contradictory to leave the people  
13 behind. I asked you not to consider  
14 just the bottom line, but the lives  
15 behind the numbers as well. Thank you.

16                   MS. KELLEMAN:

17                   Thank you, Mr. Morris.

18                   Just a point of order for  
19 our students. When we do a public  
20 hearing, we hear from you up here, it's  
21 not a back and forth, but some of us  
22 will come around and talk to you as we  
23 get time. Okay? So if we don't  
24 answer, I promise we're not that mean.  
25 It's just the process that we have.

1                   Yes, sir. Are you  
2 registered? You want to come up and  
3 speak to us? You're going to give us  
4 your name, and then when you're done,  
5 you're going to make sure that we get  
6 you registered.

7                   Okay?

8                   MR. TURNER:

9                   Okay. Testing. All  
10 right, that works. All right.

11                  My name's Tristan Turner,  
12 T-R-I-S-T-A-N T-U-R-N-E-R. And I just  
13 wanted to think about the future, I  
14 guess you would say, the next  
15 generation of people who are supposed  
16 to keep this downtown economy running.  
17 Downtown Pittsburgh is one of the  
18 Pittsburgh's, like, main attractions.  
19 The city, the view, the Overlook,  
20 obviously. And I think PRT plays,  
21 obviously, a huge part in that. They  
22 play, I mean, I can't take a guess at  
23 the percentage of people who come  
24 downtown in business suits and ties I  
25 see every single morning for the past

1 four years who keep this economy  
2 running, especially in times now where  
3 things are increasing, everything,  
4 every price is increasing. Obviously,  
5 PRT is struggling with that as we see  
6 now.

7 But I think it would make  
8 Pittsburgh as a place worse to live in,  
9 obviously for the people in it. But  
10 the economy itself would just,  
11 especially downtown, would just fall.  
12 I think all these businesses, every  
13 restaurant you see downtown, I mean, I  
14 can't think the amount of times after  
15 school I went to go get something to  
16 eat. Oh, nervous. And - - - and I don't  
17 think kids now would have the  
18 opportunity. I don't think they would  
19 even have the opportunity to go to  
20 school down here.

21 I live in Carrick. I  
22 would have to go to Carrick High  
23 School. My mom did not want me going  
24 there. She didn't want me having that  
25 type of education. I go to City High,

1 where the education there I think, they  
2 teach a completely different curriculum  
3 than anywhere else in the City of  
4 Pittsburgh. Not having the opportunity  
5 to learn the things I've learned here,  
6 it's very diverse. Kappa is very  
7 diverse. There's so many schools  
8 downtown that have such diversity and  
9 introduce new ideas and cultures and  
10 things like that to students who've  
11 never experienced.

12 I've never had 80 percent  
13 of the experiences I have now. Before  
14 I went to City High, I would never  
15 learn things about culture, the City of  
16 Pittsburgh itself just being in the  
17 downtown environment teaches you so  
18 much about life and prepares you for  
19 life and the next generation, I think.  
20 They should have the opportunity that  
21 everybody else has had to be able to  
22 have a career down here, to be able to  
23 become successful in what they want to.  
24 I mean, the people now who come down  
25 here may lose jobs. Bus workers, bus

1 drivers, themselves. It's people who,  
2 kids that go to our school, their dad's  
3 a bus driver, their mom's a bus driver.  
4 They might not have a home, they might  
5 have to move. They'll --- they'll lose  
6 this chance to be able to learn and  
7 educate themselves and keep this  
8 economy running.

9 I think Pittsburgh itself  
10 would just, that's just downtown, but  
11 everywhere. I mean, people work in all  
12 sorts of different places and rely on  
13 the T or any bus, especially people who  
14 are disabled mentally or physically.  
15 Can't get a job. And they can't ---  
16 they can't drive, they physically can't  
17 drive, or they're just not allowed to.  
18 How are they supposed to get to where  
19 they want to get? Imagine if you were  
20 them and you're stuck in the house and  
21 you have to get downtown and you live  
22 five miles away. I mean, the closest  
23 thing would be a bus stop five minutes  
24 away or you now have to walk or buy an  
25 Uber. Who has money for Uber now? The

1       economy - - - it's just everything's  
2       getting worse. I don't understand why,  
3       in a time of crisis, this also happens.  
4       I mean, I get why, but I think this is  
5       just make everything ten times worse  
6       than what it is.

7                       So five, ten years down  
8       the line, if this actually goes through  
9       and happens, I think we'd regret every  
10      part of the situation. That's it.

11                   MS. KELLEMAN:

12                   Thank you, Mr. Turner.

13                   BEN:

14                   Thank you, Tristan. We  
15       have a spot for another student before  
16       our next registered speaker can come  
17       up. Do - - - any students registered?  
18       Make sure you do afterwards. Make sure  
19       you state your name, and you'll have  
20       three minutes

21                   MS. KELLEMAN:

22                   Watch out for Dr. Ben.

23                   BEN:

24                   We'll let you know when  
25       you have one left.



1                   MR. FOWLER:

2                   Test.    Okay.

3                   Hello, everyone.    Good  
4 morning.    My name is Robert Fowler, R-  
5 O-B-E-R-T F-O-W-L-E-R.

6                   You see, I work with many  
7 daycares.    And with the daycares, I'm  
8 somewhat of a teacher.    I help out, and  
9 I mainly help out with the older kids  
10 because I'm more.    I'm old enough to,  
11 like, more be able to relate to them.  
12 And then, you see, over the summer,  
13 I'll be working with them more since we  
14 --- we won't have school at all.    And  
15 with that, I'll be needing the buses a  
16 lot because there will be a lot of  
17 field trips.    And then also as well,  
18 with many of the parents that actually  
19 works at the day --- and many of the  
20 parents that takes their kids to the  
21 daycares, I've seen a good lot of them  
22 take buses to get to the daycares.

23                  And if we start to  
24 eliminate the buses, that will become a  
25 major problem because there will be no

1        daycares in their area and will make  
2        the parents as well be forced to stay  
3        home and watch their children. And  
4        that, with that it will be a problem  
5        with their jobs and everything because  
6        they could either get fired or just let  
7        go, or even worse.

8                        So with that, with City  
9        High as well, I just did my grad  
10       project a few weeks ago. With that, I  
11       was researching about climate change,  
12       of how millions of years ago climate  
13       change was around, more richer, the air  
14       was more better for the dinosaurs that  
15       have lived in that time period. But  
16       now, since human - - - humanity has been  
17       on the planet for years as well, and  
18       over just a span of a hundred years,  
19       climate change has even gotten worse  
20       and worse. And it's all because of us,  
21       because of the fact that we are leaving  
22       because of the factories, the cars and  
23       everything.

24                        You see with buses, they  
25       help out many times. To make people

1 get to their places easier. But if we  
2 start to eliminate the buses, it will  
3 make people use more cars, and with  
4 more cars it will release more things  
5 into the air. And will make the ---  
6 will make the air worse for, and will  
7 make the air quality worse.

8 I have siblings as well,  
9 and I --- and I've been teaching them  
10 of how to get on the buses a lot. And  
11 with that, I can just see --- and if we  
12 start eliminating buses, we ought to, I  
13 don't know what I'll be able to do to  
14 even get them to school at all.

15 But what I'm trying to  
16 say is that eliminating these buses  
17 will become a problem. Not even for  
18 me, but for the homeless, the poor, and  
19 everything else to go in Pittsburgh.  
20 And all I just want to say is that can  
21 we just try to find a different  
22 solution to make everything better and  
23 more reasonable for this economy?  
24 Economy.

25 That's all. Thank you

1       for having the meeting.

2                   MS. KELLEMAN:

3                   Thank you, Mr. Fowler.

4                   BEN:

5                   Thank you, Robert. Billy  
6       Su. Billy, please come up. State your  
7       name in the mic, and you will have  
8       three minutes. We will let you know  
9       when you have one minute remaining.

10                  MR. SU:

11                  Good morning. My name is  
12       Billy Su, B-I-L-L-Y S-U.

13                  I am a student at the  
14       University of Pittsburgh, and my fellow  
15       college students are not here today  
16       because they're taking final exam and  
17       preparing for the summer move out. On  
18       top of that, they don't believe our  
19       voice can make a difference, but I do  
20       believe that.

21                  It is devastating seeing  
22       sudden mass service reduction where  
23       there has been all the advertisement  
24       about transit improvement and the  
25       university line project. Now even the

1 airport flyer will be cut, leaving  
2 airport access impossible from Oakland  
3 for early morning flights. We're broke  
4 college student, and we can't afford to  
5 pay \$8,200 to just get an Uber or Lyft  
6 to go to the airport. That's half of  
7 my airplane ticket.

8 I use PRT buses multiple  
9 times a day to get around, to go to my  
10 classes, get groceries, as well as  
11 different parts of the county for  
12 cultural leisure activities and  
13 visiting friends, which includes rural  
14 routes with low riderships.

15 With the cuts, all these  
16 connections are impossible and us  
17 college students cannot go anywhere  
18 besides Oakland that's 20, 30 minutes  
19 away by bus. This transit cut proposed  
20 by PRT is like a burger place, telling  
21 me that they will no longer serve fries  
22 to save money.

23 A public transit system  
24 should not only rely --- should not  
25 only serve the routes in densely

1       populated corridors, but more  
2       importantly the last mile connections  
3       that that - - - for those people who  
4       needs it.

5                       Before this, I thought  
6       the entire county is under the 15  
7       minutes walking shift, and I am very  
8       wrong. With these cuts, even more  
9       parts of the county will be  
10      inaccessible to us who solely rely on  
11      the public transit, and I am deeply  
12      disappointed to see PRT officials even  
13      considering cutting routes for the  
14      budget's sake.

15                      I encourage PRT to look  
16      at other transit companies in Asia who  
17      serve the community without reducing  
18      service, but also debt free. I doubt  
19      this transit cut can actually save PRT  
20      from the entire financial black hole.  
21      Moreover, the cut will likely result in  
22      a snowball of even lower ridership due  
23      to inaccessibility. I urge PRT  
24      officials to optimize routings before  
25      eliminating. Consider making windy

1 routes, such as 58, 59, into services  
2 that have less turns so transits are  
3 more efficient and on time.

4 Please also consider  
5 providing more crosstown services  
6 rather than having effectually every  
7 route to turn around in downtown  
8 because that makes transit inconvenient  
9 and very time consuming. After all,  
10 transit should be designed for  
11 everyone, even though only some use it.

12 While adjustments are  
13 inevitable, vital routes, particularly  
14 the 28X which provides the gateway to  
15 the airport, should be kept at current  
16 frequency and ran with larger buses.  
17 PRT, please continue to be the reliable  
18 backbone of our daily commute and the  
19 safe ride home from anywhere in the  
20 county. Thank you so much.

21 MS. SANTOS:

22 Thank you. The next  
23 speaker is Ross Mitchell.

24 MS. KELLEMAN:

25 He's been waiting.

1       Ralph, you have been waiting all  
2       morning.

3                   MS. SANTOS:

4                   Thank you.

5                   MS. KELLEMAN:

6                   Thank you for your  
7       patience.

8                   MS. SANTOS:

9                   You have three minutes,  
10          and we'll let you know when you have  
11          one minute remaining. Thank you.

12                   MR. MITCHELL:

13                   Good morning. R-O-S-S M-  
14          I-T-C-H-E-L-L.

15                   Noticing there are a lot  
16          of people who have signed up who  
17          weren't here when they were called. I  
18          hope that's not a reflection of them  
19          thinking that it didn't matter.

20                   I'm retired, security  
21          worker, and also a member in good  
22          standing, but retired member of the  
23          Musicians Union. Service after --- no  
24          service after 11 o'clock, no. No, no.  
25          There's an old adage that was in this



1 town, a lot of local media heads would  
2 say that downtown after five o'clock,  
3 yeah, closes up. We have to have  
4 service after 11 o'clock. That ---  
5 that's just not going to work.

6 This young gentleman, Mr.  
7 Su, mentioned that the 28X. Why do we  
8 have a vaunted coming of a new airport  
9 and the renaming? Pittsburgh Regional  
10 Transit is not going to go there.  
11 That, no. makes no sense.

12 As someone who used to,  
13 with one of my security jobs, pick up  
14 your money within an armored car  
15 company, I've seen a different side of  
16 things. A public transit system is not  
17 meant to generate revenue --- it's not  
18 a profit generating entity. It's a  
19 public service entity. Now this may be  
20 hard to stomach for some folks here,  
21 and I'm going to sit down and listen to  
22 a few more comments.

23 But if the \$0.25 cent  
24 proposed fare raise could be \$0.35  
25 cent, in the event that we continue

1 service after 11 o'clock, that's a  
2 twisting of my budget I have to go for.  
3 Because again, sorry to repeat myself,  
4 no service after 11 o'clock? You're  
5 economically strangling, are already  
6 difficulties in that category of  
7 economics. So I'm not going to talk  
8 politics. No.

9 The state legislature has  
10 policies and issues that Pittsburgh  
11 needs to go to them for, and any local  
12 politician who says so and so needs to  
13 do whatever monetarily, and it's the  
14 legislature. What you have control of  
15 is asking the legislature to increase  
16 transit funding for all the transit  
17 systems in the state, and we must have  
18 service to our new airport and most  
19 definitely after 11:00 p.m. Thank you.

20 MS. SANTOS:

21 Thank you.

22 MS. KELLEMAN:

23 And Mr. Mitchell, I had  
24 your first name incorrect. I  
25 apologize, Ross Mitchell. Thank you.

1 And thank you for waiting all morning.

2 MR. MITCHELL:

3 No problem.

4 MS. SANTOS:

5 We have an opening right

6 now if a student would like to speak.

7 Okay, thank you. Please --- okay.

8 Okay.

9 MS. KELLEMAN:

10 Okay.

11 So we have an opening for

12 two students. Because if this young

13 lady waits any longer, thank you.

14 MS. SANTOS:

15 Please state your name.

16 You'll have three minutes to speak, and

17 we'll let you know when you have one.

18 MS. HARRIS:

19 Okay.

20 My name is Veshae Harris,

21 V-E-S-H-A-E H-A-R-R-I-S. And I am a

22 student at City Charter High School.

23 First, I want to say City

24 High is a school that changes student's

25 lives. I can say me personally, it has

1 changed my life. I came from, like, a  
2 rough, you know, school before. You  
3 know, I had like a lot of stuff going  
4 on. And if I wasn't able to come to  
5 City High, I wouldn't be the student I  
6 am today. I'm a student that works a  
7 part time job which, you know, not too  
8 many part time jobs pay that much. And  
9 you know, with the --- if they raise  
10 the prices on buses or if they take,  
11 like, some of the lines away, I  
12 wouldn't be able to get to where I need  
13 to go or, like, get a better job once  
14 I'm done with high school and get  
15 there.

16 Also, I live in an area  
17 where not too many younger students can  
18 get, like, jobs and stuff because the  
19 hire --- the age is, like, 16 and up to  
20 get, like, a part time job or, like,  
21 even just that fast food. And there's  
22 not too many 14 and 15 year olds who  
23 parents can just give them money to get  
24 on a bus. And there's not too many  
25 younger kids who have the money to get

1 to where they want to go to see, like,  
2 other friends or just to go out and  
3 stuff like that. There's also so many  
4 students who come from rough  
5 backgrounds, whose parents use the bus  
6 to get to work, to even pay the bills.

7 That's all. That's all I  
8 got to say. Thank you.

9 MS. KELLEMAN:

10 Thank you, Ms. Harris.

11 MS. SANTOS:

12 Thank you. We can take  
13 another student. Thank you. Please  
14 state your name. You'll have three  
15 minutes to speak, and we'll let you  
16 know when you have one minute  
17 remaining.

18 MS. TAYLOR:

19 Hello, my name is Cameron  
20 Taylor, C-A-M-E-R-O-N T-A-Y-L-O-R.

21 So I'm not going to bore  
22 you with any statistics or anything  
23 like that. I just want to paint the  
24 picture for what it is. I live in  
25 Wilkinsburg, which is very underfunded

1 neighborhood. And aside from the P16  
2 and the P67, which only run during rush  
3 hour, I can only take the 67, which  
4 only comes once an hour and is very  
5 unreliable. So that in itself is a  
6 struggle. So, thinking about if  
7 funding is cut and if lines are cut,  
8 the 67 is going to become even more  
9 unreliable. And I know I'm not the  
10 only person who writes the 67 because  
11 there are tons of college students,  
12 tons of elderly people, tons of kids  
13 like me who get on the bus. It is  
14 completely packed, and I can't even  
15 ration to think about how if we cut the  
16 funding for the 67 even more and not  
17 even just my bus, all the buses, it  
18 will just continue to get worse.

19 So, I have noticed that  
20 some people have mentioned that if they  
21 do not have access to Port Authority,  
22 we will have to go to our home schools.  
23 Wilkinsburg does not have a home  
24 school. So I will be forced to go out  
25 of my way to find a different school to

1 go to, which is so --- so many people  
2 are going to have to go through the  
3 same thing. And it is just so  
4 unrationable, it is so just --- it's  
5 horrible. Like, I just --- I don't  
6 know how else to paint the picture for  
7 you is that my mom, I live with my mom.

8 She lives in Wilkinsburg,  
9 and she has to balance the needs of  
10 multiple kids at once. We cannot  
11 afford Ubers, we can't afford any of  
12 that. So we have to rely on Port  
13 Authority to get me to school, to work,  
14 to wherever. If we take that option  
15 away from me, and not only just me, the  
16 many kids that are struggling right  
17 now, we have no other option. My mom  
18 is going to have to work multiple jobs  
19 just to feed us and put food on the  
20 table. So it's horrible that we're  
21 proposing to do this when there are  
22 people who can't even afford to put  
23 food on the table.

24 And getting to work and  
25 getting to school should be just a

1       basic necessity and a human right that  
2       we should have. So the fact that we're  
3       taking this away, it's just mind  
4       blowing. So I'm - - - I'm asking you,  
5       please reconsider because this will be  
6       detrimental to so many people and I  
7       wouldn't have to. I wouldn't want to  
8       have to go and negotiate, you know,  
9       having a job or even going to school  
10      just for the sake of not being able to  
11      pay \$3 to go back and forth to school  
12      and to work. Thank you.

13               MS. KELLEMAN:

14              Thank you, Ms. Taylor.

15               MS. SANTOS:

16              Thank you for speaking.

17              We'll take another  
18      student. Thank you. Please state your  
19      name, and you'll have three minutes to  
20      speak.

21               MR. AQRA:

22              My name is Zane Aqra, Z-  
23      A - N - E A - Q - R - A.

24              During the pandemic,  
25      there was a 75 percent cut in ridership



1       caused by COVID. Relief funds then  
2       were put in place, helping stabilize  
3       the transit system here. But those are  
4       now gone.

5               We know that any mass  
6       transit system does not rely on  
7       ridership fees. We see this with our  
8       friends in Philly and New York, where  
9       ongoing investment keeps systems  
10      running, even when ridership is low.  
11      That is why we need state funding. Our  
12      --- our legislators in Harrisburg need  
13      to make themselves aware that  
14      Pennsylvania cannot rely on single  
15      vehicle infrastructure. We already  
16      feel the effects, inflating parking  
17      costs, common hour congestion that  
18      makes our short trips even miserable.  
19      And that a worsening lack of access for  
20      those without personal vehicles.

21             As a youth member of our  
22      City, I see that very plainly that City  
23      culture is deeply restrained or ---  
24      sorry, deeply reliant on busing. Less  
25      and less in our youth are getting our

1 licenses, let alone purchasing cars,  
2 which means our reliance on public  
3 transit is even higher measurably. Is  
4 high, if not higher measurably, than a  
5 corporate commuter. City Charter High  
6 School sees that 95 percent of our  
7 students rely on transit. Most of  
8 those are on routes that are being cut.

9 This is not just a  
10 transit issue. It is a question of  
11 whether young people, working people,  
12 and communities without cars will  
13 continue to see a future in the city.  
14 Thank you.

15 MS. SANTOS:

16 Thank you for speaking.

17 We can take another  
18 student. Thank you. State your name,  
19 and you have three minutes to speak.

20 MR. ELLSWORTH:

21 My name is Alex  
22 Ellsworth, A-L-E-X E-L-L-S-W-O-R-T-H.  
23 I won't be long.

24 Thousands of people  
25 across the city, including myself, will

1 be heavily impacted by the proposed  
2 changes to PRT. I rely on public  
3 transit on a daily basis. I use it to  
4 get to school every day, and I also use  
5 it to get to work. And with the  
6 proposed changes, it would take me  
7 nearly double the amount of time to get  
8 there and cost double the price. For  
9 others, they may not be able to get to  
10 work at all.

11 There are only two bus  
12 lines in the entire city that will  
13 remain unaffected by this change.  
14 Every other line is either being  
15 reduced or eliminated. Something must  
16 be done. Thank you.

17 MS. SANTOS:

18 Thank you for speaking.

19 The next speaker is  
20 Richard Walter. Okay, thank you. You  
21 have three minutes to speak, and we'll  
22 let you know when you have one minute  
23 remaining.

24 MR. WALTER:

25 Yeah. My name is Richard

1 Walter, and I live in Bethel Park and  
2 I'm on dialysis three days a week. And  
3 I have to depend on the Silver line,  
4 and then I have doctor's appointments.  
5 I have to depend on, like, other routes  
6 and other places I go and other things  
7 I do in my life. So I have to have  
8 public transportation to get around.

9 And I --- I go visit  
10 friends and if I don't have that, I  
11 can't even go to see them. And it just  
12 makes it unreasonable. If you don't  
13 have transportation, how are you  
14 supposed to get around? So, I don't  
15 know what else to say, but I hope they  
16 --- they don't take off the Silver line  
17 like I said, because how am I supposed  
18 to get the dialysis, you know? So.  
19 But thank you for letting me speak for  
20 a couple of minutes. So, thank you.

21 MS. SANTOS:

22 Thank you for speaking.

23 Next speaker is Stuart  
24 Strickland. Thank you. Please state  
25 your name. You have three minutes to

1 speak, and we'll let you know when you  
2 have one minute remaining.

3 MR. STRICKLAND:

4 My name is Stuart  
5 Strickland, McCandless Township,  
6 spelled S-T-U-A-R-T. Last name S-T-R-  
7 I-C-K-L-A-N-D.

8 Good morning, Ms.  
9 Kelleman.

10 MS. KELLEMAN:

11 Good morning.

12 MR. STRICKLAND:

13 Members of the Board and  
14 other elected officials and dignitaries  
15 present. I cannot be the only person  
16 in this situation. Yes, I have a  
17 reliable car, a clean license, and can  
18 afford to drive and pay to park  
19 downtown. But I don't want to. Why  
20 should I be forced to part with over  
21 \$30 a day just to keep my car close to  
22 where I work and be forced to get stuck  
23 in traffic both directions? That's  
24 nuts.

25 Let me put it simply. I

1 take the bus by choice. I do not want  
2 that choice removed. Thirty-five (35)  
3 years ago, I had four cars and put  
4 60,000 miles on the fleet each year.  
5 But a temporary move made a transit  
6 commute possible, and I found I liked  
7 it. On our next permanent move, 1991,  
8 we chose to live near a bus line. In  
9 three short years, we retired three of  
10 those cars and lived with only one for  
11 the next 18 years. The money we saved  
12 not keeping multiple cars on the road,  
13 allowed us to pay off the mortgage  
14 eight years early, paid for my master's  
15 degree, allowed us to live on moderate  
16 income, and we still became debt free  
17 by our 50s. All because I could use  
18 the transit system for over 90 percent  
19 of my travel needs.

20 In 1995, I was only  
21 making \$36,000 a year. I don't know  
22 what that is in today's money, but it  
23 sure wasn't six digit territory. Using  
24 the bus saved my family \$12,000 a year  
25 in today's money, 18 years in a row.

1 That \$12,000 is AAA's estimate of what  
2 it costs to run a car for a year.

3 I want everyone to have  
4 the same opportunities I had. I ask  
5 everyone here, what would you do with  
6 an extra \$12 grand a year? Pay off  
7 debt? Get out from under that college  
8 loan or that second mortgage? Go back  
9 to school, take a vacation, start a  
10 business? My wife and I not only paid  
11 off the mortgage early, we also put  
12 both of our kids through college.  
13 Further still, not keeping two or three  
14 or four cars running helped us keep the  
15 one older car running longer. So we  
16 were able to put off its replacement by  
17 five years, and then pay cash in full  
18 when we did replace it.

19 In short, transit is not  
20 a government handout for the poor. For  
21 those of us a little higher in the  
22 ladder, it meant major quality of life  
23 improvements all because I chose to use  
24 transit.

25 To reiterate, I do not

1 want only to avoid these cuts. I also  
2 want the 2011 cuts restored. I also  
3 want the 2007 cuts restored. I also  
4 want the 2002 cuts restored so that  
5 everyone can have the same  
6 opportunities that I had. Thank you  
7 for giving me the opportunity to speak.

8 MS. KELLEMAN:

9 Thank you, Stuart.

10 MS. SANTOS:

11 Thank you. The next  
12 speaker is Marla Bird. Please state  
13 your name. You'll have three minutes  
14 to speak, and we'll let you know when  
15 you have one minute remaining.

16 MS. BIRD:

17 Marla Bird, M-A-R-L-A B-  
18 I-R-D.

19 I'm here to speak on  
20 behalf of my son and the other 13  
21 tenants in his building. These young  
22 adults are all physically handicapped  
23 and fully depend on the paratransit  
24 access services. There are no other  
25 transportation services in the area for



1       them.

2                       There are several in the  
3       building who work, including my son.  
4       He has worked at PNC Park for the past  
5       17 years. He will have no way to get  
6       to and from work if the access trips to  
7       their destination are discontinued.  
8       Also, he works after 11:00 p.m. he  
9       takes the last access at 11:45 out of  
10      town from PNC Park many nights when  
11      they have evening games. If these are  
12      stopped, I'm not sure how he's going to  
13      get home from work.

14                     These 14 tenants in his  
15      building will have no access to get  
16      anywhere for doctors, groceries, church  
17      activities, work, or anything. They  
18      will be absolutely stranded because  
19      there is no bus lines or anything in  
20      their area.

21                     Maybe some of these free  
22      trips for the elderly to go to the  
23      casinos and that should be cut back to  
24      save on money. And I have sat many a  
25      night at a hospital in North Hills and

1 watched at 2:00 and 3:00 in the morning  
2 a bus come and go, there's nobody on  
3 the bus but the driver. Nobody gets  
4 off, nobody gets on. I think that is a  
5 lot of waste.

6 And to leave these 14  
7 young adults who want to work and want  
8 to be participating in society,  
9 stranded in their apartments with no  
10 way to get around, I think is very,  
11 very unfair to them and to other people  
12 in this 60 plus areas, percentage areas  
13 that you want to cut the ADA  
14 paratransit rides. It's just very sad  
15 because they have no other options to  
16 call to get a ride that are reliable.  
17 If they do call and they're told  
18 there's a ride the day that they're to  
19 go to work, they call and say we don't  
20 have a ride for you. Well then, what  
21 do they do? They get fired from work  
22 because they never have a ride? That's  
23 not fair.

24 Access is the only  
25 reliable transportation they have, and

1 I beg you to please find some other way  
2 than to cut this route for these people  
3 who don't have a choice. They can't  
4 drive, they can't call an Uber, they  
5 can't call a taxi. It's just out of  
6 their realm to be able to pay for that.  
7 So if you could find any other way to  
8 not cut these routes for these people  
9 who really desperately need it, I beg  
10 you to try to find it. Thank you.

11 MS. SANTOS:

12 Thank you. We can take  
13 any student comments if anyone would  
14 like to. Thank you. Please state your  
15 name, you'll have three minutes to  
16 speak, and we'll let you know when you  
17 have one minute remaining.

18 CHASE:

19 Hello, I am Chase, C-H-A-  
20 S-E. I'm a senior in City High Charter  
21 School.

22 I take the P76 to school  
23 every day. I graduate in June, but  
24 these transit cuts will - - - will hurt  
25 many other students, coworkers, and

1 local businesses. They could also  
2 limit access to schools like mine. And  
3 with the Pittsburgh - - - with Pittsburgh  
4 hosting the NFL draft next year, now is  
5 the worst time to cut transit. Thank  
6 you for your time.

7 MS. SANTOS:

8 Thank you. Any other  
9 student that's interested in speaking?  
10 Okay, thank you. Please state your  
11 name. You'll have three minutes to  
12 speak, and we'll let you know when you  
13 have one minute remaining.

14 MR. DAVIS:

15 Hi. My name's Iklas  
16 Davis, I-K-L-A-S D-A-V-I-S.

17 One thing I'll say is  
18 that I'm not going to make it as  
19 personal, because I know that you all  
20 have to do what you all have to do.  
21 But one thing that I'll have to say is  
22 that looking at it economically, one  
23 thing I'll say is that yes, the NFL  
24 draft is coming. That's more and more  
25 people coming to Pittsburgh to come

1 look at the draft, look at all the  
2 drafts, and that's more money going  
3 into y'all due to the transit.

4 I'll also say that  
5 personally, I'll say it takes me an  
6 hour to get to school and it --- no, my  
7 bad. It takes me an hour to get to  
8 school on one bus, and it takes me 30  
9 minutes to get to school on a different  
10 bus. Cutting --- cutting buses will  
11 also have a effect to a lot of students  
12 because no matter what, again, not a  
13 lot of people are able to pay for Ubers  
14 and the disabled are going to be out  
15 without, like, getting help and stuff.

16 I'll also say that at the  
17 end of the day, no matter what, cutting  
18 --- cutting buses will also limit ways  
19 to get to places like Kennywood, that  
20 is one of the famous attractions to  
21 Pittsburgh, to PNC Stadium, to the ---  
22 to the Pirates, to the Steelers, and to  
23 Penguins the game as well. That's also  
24 a lot of money going into, getting to  
25 there and back home. And I'll do --- I

1 will say, due to traffic, it will be  
2 less on traffic if a lot of people have  
3 to drive their cars in to go see these  
4 games.

5 And that's all. Thank  
6 you.

7 MS. KELLEMAN:

8 Thank you.

9 MS. SANTOS:

10 Thank you. We can take  
11 another student. Please state your  
12 name. You'll have three minutes to  
13 speak.

14 MR. SINDLER:

15 Hi, my name is Noah  
16 Sindler, N-O-A-H S-I-N-D-L-E-R. And  
17 I'm really just going to reiterate some  
18 of the things that other people have  
19 said in the past --- in the past 30  
20 minutes or so.

21 We have people who need  
22 to take transportation to get dialysis.  
23 We have people that need to take  
24 transportation to get to the airport.  
25 And how are they going to be able to

1 pay for Uber rides or Lyft rides when  
2 they are half as expensive as their  
3 airplane tickets? How do you expect  
4 people to get to where they need to be  
5 when they don't have the ability to get  
6 there when you are cutting these bus  
7 lines?

8 I just don't get it. You  
9 have the NFL draft coming up. That's  
10 going to be hundreds of thousands of  
11 people coming here. How are they going  
12 to get to wherever it's going to be  
13 hosted, either at Acrisure or at the  
14 Point or wherever? How do you expect  
15 people to get there? Because sure as  
16 hell they are not going to walk from  
17 however far their hotel is because all  
18 the hotels are going to be booked.

19 And the last thing that I  
20 want to say, if you are getting rid of,  
21 if there's going to be an 11:00 p.m.  
22 curfew because there's no need for it,  
23 or if it's because people are unwilling  
24 to drive at that time, I would. I  
25 would. Because all these people need

1       these buses to get around, and I'd be  
2       perfectly fine with stepping up and  
3       doing that. Because clearly, you guys  
4       can't. Thank you.

5               MS. SANTOS:

6               Thank you for speaking.  
7       We can take one more student right now.

8               MR. SHAFFER:

9               Do you have to be a  
10       student? I'm scheduled for 11:30.

11              MS. SANTOS:

12              11:30? Yes.

13              MR. SHAFFER:

14              You have one, you have  
15       one.

16              MS. SANTOS:

17              Yes, we're just going to  
18       --- we're trying to fill in the gaps  
19       until we get to your scheduled time.

20              MR. SHAFFER:

21              Thank you.

22              MS. SANTOS:

23              But we'll get to you.  
24       Thank you. Please state your name.  
25       You have three minutes to speak.



1                   MS. ALALI:

2                   Hi, my name is Marah, M-  
3                   A - R - A - H .

4                   I'm here to talk about  
5                   the cutting buses of the City of  
6                   Pittsburgh. I have so many reasons why  
7                   this would affect a lot of people of  
8                   the City of Pittsburgh. People who - - -  
9                   it will make it harder for people who  
10                  get to work, school, doctor's  
11                  appointments, and especially where I  
12                  live. I live in Crafton High. There  
13                  is a lot of people who are coming new  
14                  to the U.S., and they use the buses,  
15                  doctor's appointments, work, and other  
16                  stuff. And it will make it harder for  
17                  them.

18                 And coming to school will  
19                 take an hour for me to get it. And I  
20                 have to leave early from home to go to  
21                 the bus because it takes an hour to 30  
22                 minute, or 40 minutes maximum. And it  
23                 will affect people who are, I cannot  
24                 say the word. People who are special  
25                 needs and stuff.

1 That's it. Thank you.

2 MS. KELLEMAN:

3 Thank you.

4 MS. SANTOS:

5 Thank you. Okay.

6 We'll take one more

7 student.

8 MS. WELCH:

9 Hi. I'm not a student,  
10 clearly, but my students were speaking  
11 earlier. I'm Angela Welch, and I am  
12 one of the assistant principals at City  
13 Charter High School. And my name is  
14 spelled A-N-G-E-L-A W-E-L-C-H.

15 So I've been working at  
16 City High for over 20 years, and I've  
17 used public transit to get to work  
18 every day. Right now, I am taking the,  
19 either the G2 or the G31. But most  
20 importantly, I'm not worried about  
21 myself because I can figure that out.  
22 I'm worried about the 600 kids that  
23 come into the City every day that we  
24 educate at City High.

25 And so, we rely on the

1 buses. If students have - - - don't have  
2 access to public transportation, they  
3 can't get to school. Our school prides  
4 itself on preparing students for life  
5 after high school. And so, that  
6 includes coming into the City, being a  
7 professional, going to work. If we  
8 limit these buses, we're going to limit  
9 their education and they will not be  
10 able to come to City High.

11 They will have to go to  
12 their home schools, and some of their  
13 home schools are considered unsafe or  
14 don't have high academic, rigorous  
15 expectations for them. And so, it is  
16 important for you to think about this.  
17 Our school, which has been here in  
18 downtown Pittsburgh for over 20 years,  
19 will no longer be able to serve  
20 students. And also, we have 100  
21 employees that also take public  
22 transportation.

23 It's really important  
24 that these cuts are not made, because  
25 at this point, there are students and

1 families who have said to us, if these  
2 cuts are made, next year, we can no  
3 longer come to your school. And at  
4 this point, it is a serious concern and  
5 we're worried about our student  
6 population.

7 On a personal note, I  
8 will tell you that my mom is full time  
9 in a wheelchair, and she directly  
10 relies, and I rely, on access for her.  
11 We cannot transport without ACCESS  
12 because she's in a wheelchair full  
13 time. And so, I would hate to see cuts  
14 for that, for the ACCESS system because  
15 we would not be able to take her to  
16 doctor's appointments or to wherever  
17 she would like to go. And so, that  
18 would be a huge detriment to her also.

19 I thank you for your  
20 time, and please reconsider on making  
21 those cuts so that we can function as a  
22 successful high school for our  
23 students, who are awesome, by the way.  
24 Thank you.

25 MS. SANTOS:

1 Thank you for speaking.

2 MS. KELLEMAN:

3 Do we have anyone here  
4 who was registered to speak in the ten  
5 o'clock hour? I didn't forget you.  
6 You're almost there. I could --- we  
7 could not. Anyone who was registered  
8 to speak in the ten o'clock hour that  
9 you did not get your opportunity to  
10 speak?

11 And I apologize for  
12 jumping in, Laura. I've made it a  
13 mess.

14 MS. SANTOS:

15 It's okay.

16 MS. KELLEMAN:

17 All right.

18 You're back in charge.

19 MS. SANTOS:

20 All right.

21 The next speaker is  
22 Olivia Sylvester. Okay, thank you.  
23 You have three minutes to speak. Oh,  
24 you have --- oh, no, it's okay. Thank  
25 you.

1                   MS. SYLVESTER:

2                   Good morning. My name is  
3                   Olivia Sylvester, and I am a graduate  
4                   student in mathematics at the  
5                   University of Pittsburgh. I moved here  
6                   in August, and will continue to live  
7                   here in Pittsburgh for the next four  
8                   years of my PhD program.

9                   One of my favorite things  
10                  about the City is the bus system. My  
11                  student ID acts as a bus pass, and I  
12                  don't have a car, and I never felt like  
13                  I needed one. I recognize the budget  
14                  crisis requires cuts to the bus lines,  
15                  but - - - but I urge you to rethink the  
16                  areas which are being cut.

17                  Public transportation  
18                  isn't just about providing a service.  
19                  It provides public safety. I'm  
20                  specifically referring to the buses  
21                  that run until 2:00 a.m. having their  
22                  times cut to stop running at 11:00  
23                  p.m., such as the 61s, 71s, 54s, and  
24                  82. I'm aware that there are fewer  
25                  riders, and running during these times

1 costs money, the same way funding  
2 firefighters and police officers to  
3 keep the city safe costs money as well.

4 Pittsburgh, and  
5 especially the neighborhoods around  
6 Oakland, are largely student  
7 populations, which means thousands of  
8 young women like me, who may fear  
9 walking home alone at night after a  
10 study session runs longer than  
11 anticipated, or a night hanging out  
12 with my friends in Southside, where I  
13 prefer to spend \$25 on local bars and  
14 restaurants than on the Uber app to  
15 take me home.

16 With the buses past 11:00  
17 p.m. gone, so much money that could be  
18 going into the local economy will  
19 instead be going to an app that takes  
20 anywhere from 50 percent to 80 percent  
21 from the drivers who actually did the  
22 work. Me and many others would gladly  
23 pay increased fares past 11:00 p.m. if  
24 it's still cheaper and safer than the  
25 alternatives. And while I'd like all

1 the buses to stay running past 11:00  
2 p.m., if I could only save one, it  
3 would be the 54. It connects Southside  
4 to Oakland to the strip district. It's  
5 how the young college students on  
6 Carson Street who may now have made the  
7 best decisions that night, can get home  
8 safely because they deserve safety,  
9 too. It is my ride home after  
10 supporting the local music scene at  
11 Thunderbird Cafe in Lawrenceville or  
12 Bottle Rocket in Southside. Most  
13 importantly, it connects my friends to  
14 me, and as I suppose, is the case for  
15 so many others.

16 This is why I fight to  
17 save it and why I urge you to fight to  
18 save it as well. Thank you for your  
19 time.

20 MS. SANTOS:

21 Thank you. The next  
22 speaker is Wyndell Williams. Again,  
23 that is Wyndell Williams. Next  
24 speaker, Nancy Wehe. Oh, okay, thank  
25 you. Next Speaker, Sonia Kail. Oh,



1       yes.    Okay.

2                       Sir, what time are you  
3       speaking?

4                       MR. NEAL:

5                       I believe 11:30.

6                       MS. SANTOS:

7                       Would you like to go  
8       ahead of time?

9                       MR. NEAL:

10                      Beg your pardon?

11                      MS. SANTOS:

12                      Would you like to go  
13       earlier?   Yes.   You can take the podium  
14       if you wish.   Thank you.   You have  
15       three minutes to speak.

16                      MR. NEAL:

17                      Thank you very much.  
18       Hello.   It's very --- I'm very pleased  
19       to see you here, Senator.

20                      PUBLIC MEMBER:

21                      What's your name?

22                      MR. NEAL:

23                      I'm sorry, allow me to  
24       --- well, my name's Terry Neal, N-E-A-  
25       L.   and I'm a retired Navy veteran.   I

1 relocated to Pittsburgh, made this my  
2 home four years ago. I lived on the  
3 north side, but I just recently, in the  
4 last year, relocated to Penn Hills.

5 I want to speak  
6 specifically about one route. It  
7 affects a lot of people in my church,  
8 and there's a lot of conversation going  
9 on about this particular route and a  
10 lot of the other cancellations. This  
11 is the 77 that actually is being  
12 canceled. That would take people from  
13 downtown all the way out to Penn Hills.  
14 You're going through Homewood, East  
15 Liberty, entire neighborhoods. The  
16 conversations that are being had is one  
17 of disenfranchisement. You have a lot  
18 of people who are poor and feel that  
19 people don't care about them. You're  
20 going to have people that aren't going  
21 to be able to go to work, along with  
22 their daycare. Now, the expense of  
23 Uber or other transportations that  
24 they're going to have to take on.

25 It --- it's ridiculous,

1 and people are afraid because it's  
2 going to change people's lives totally.  
3 I know that's a consideration that you  
4 put into your decisions, and business  
5 is one of the primary things that you  
6 have to look at. And cost is something  
7 that doesn't go away, and that's  
8 appreciated and respected.

9 But we have communities  
10 of people, and I'm new to Pittsburgh,  
11 but I sense communities because I do a  
12 lot of activities. There's a lot of  
13 communities that feel that people just  
14 don't care about them. You know,  
15 unless you've done something wrong,  
16 unless you actually draw some attention  
17 to yourself in some other kind of  
18 ridiculous way. You have people who  
19 believe in this City. This is a great  
20 City. I --- I compliment the transfer  
21 system. I've lived in a lot of major  
22 cities. I grew up in South Chicago.  
23 Your busway rivals the metro in D.C.  
24 So you guys have a lot of things to be  
25 proud about.

1 But the major component,  
2 the people, seem to be one of the least  
3 considerations. They should be the  
4 primary consideration. You're going to  
5 have neighborhoods that aren't going to  
6 be able to go anywhere. There are  
7 members at my church who can't even go  
8 anywhere on the weekends because the  
9 buses doesn't - - - don't ride in their  
10 neighborhood on the weekends already.  
11 So now they're talking about  
12 eliminating an entire route.  
13 Frankstown Road, we're talking about.

14 Thank you - - - a major  
15 route in this city. It goes all  
16 through - - - many neighborhoods, and  
17 it's talking about eliminating it  
18 totally. Thank you for listening.

19 MS. SANTOS:

20 Thank you. We can take a  
21 student speaker. The next speaker  
22 would be Karen Smith. Thank you. You  
23 have three minutes to speak, and we'll  
24 let you know when you have one minute  
25 remaining.

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MS. SALVADEO:

Great, thank you. I'm actually a teacher that was with the student group. My name is Alicia Salvadeo, A-L-I-C-I-A S-A-L-V-A-D-E-O.

As I said, I'm a teacher with City Charter High School. I've been a bus rider for 17 years, since I first came here to attend Pitt. I do rely it to go to work every day. One of my lines, the two, would be cut. Another would be partially eliminated. I only live four miles from the school, but I spend about an hour commuting every day because of times, walking, et cetera. I have a young son who was born last year. That's time cutting into time with my son, right?

I'm also here because I think he deserves clean air. More cars on the road because of fewer buses is a step in the opposite direction for him and a lot of other young people and older people who struggle with asthma, like myself.

1 I have well over 100  
2 other reasons to be here, and you've  
3 already heard from a lot of our  
4 students, so I'm here on their behalf  
5 as well. We looked at the lists  
6 together in my class. We took a look  
7 and a lot shared how it would impact  
8 them getting to and from school. It  
9 would impact their younger siblings,  
10 who they're often responsible for  
11 getting to school or daycare before  
12 they even hit our rooms. And some of  
13 them, I have to keep awake during the  
14 day because they work late hours, often  
15 past 11:00 p.m., at which point they  
16 might not be able to get a bus home.  
17 So this would impact them greatly, not  
18 to mention 180,000 other workers,  
19 drivers, people getting to and from  
20 hospitals, healthcare, et cetera.

21 Finally, I'll just say, I  
22 understand this is a state budget  
23 issue. Sometimes, we hear that it's a  
24 matter of, you know, urban versus rural  
25 when making these decisions. And I

1 understand that people in rural  
2 communities need and deserve a lot as  
3 well. But a lot of people, as it is in  
4 Pittsburgh, and in Philadelphia, can't  
5 pay their rent, can't make their gas  
6 bills, can't buy these groceries that  
7 might be grown in Pennsylvania or  
8 elsewhere, pay their gas bills that  
9 maybe, you know, some of these  
10 communities, you know, help get our gas  
11 in terms of. Yeah, our electric  
12 infrastructure, gas infrastructure.

13 So a lot of this is  
14 interconnected, and rural and city  
15 residents need to rely on each other.  
16 I think this is a priorities issue.  
17 And buses, mass transit, sustainable  
18 transit absolutely has to be a priority  
19 for our entire state. We should  
20 evaluate, you know, what large  
21 companies are getting tax breaks and  
22 consider making sure that they're  
23 paying their fair share. And I know a  
24 lot of other students have had  
25 excellent ideas. I know Pittsburghers

1 for Public Transit have had ideas in  
2 terms of where we can make up those  
3 dollars as well.

4 Thank you very much for  
5 giving myself and my students the time  
6 this morning.

7 MS. KELLEMAN:

8 And I see some signs over  
9 there. Are there other students with  
10 signs that you want to show? Oh, okay.  
11 Well, we'll wait for everybody to get  
12 the contingent held. Oh, there we ---  
13 thank you, thank you.

14 MS. SANTOS:

15 Thank you for speaking.  
16 The next speaker is Karen Smith. Okay.  
17 If any students would like to speak, we  
18 can take you now. Oh, hello. Please  
19 state your name. You'll have three  
20 minutes to speak.

21 MS. TURK:

22 Good morning, everyone.  
23 My name is Kelly Turk. I am a science  
24 teacher at City Charter High School,  
25 and I'd use public transit in the



1 morning and in the afternoon. I take  
2 the 01 and the 012, which will both be  
3 eliminated routes. Now, I'm not so  
4 much worried about myself as I am about  
5 my students. I will make it work.

6 So, this is a very  
7 serious impact on our students, staff,  
8 families, and the broader community,  
9 and the consequences extend beyond mere  
10 inconvenience. Many of our students  
11 depend on public transportation to  
12 attend school, work, part time jobs,  
13 and access to essential services like  
14 healthcare. Reduced service means more  
15 cars on the road, longer commutes, and  
16 increased traffic congestion. Families  
17 will face higher costs as they become  
18 more reliant on personal vehicles or  
19 ride shares like Uber.

20 Opportunities for field  
21 trips and enrichment --- enrichment  
22 activities may decline unless schools  
23 can absorb those extra expense of  
24 private transportation. Limited bus  
25 options could drive up parking prices

1 due to simple supply and demand. And  
2 with more cars on the road, we'll see  
3 the rise in carbon emissions, worsening  
4 the air quality for everyone,  
5 especially those with asthma or other  
6 respiratory conditions. You may think  
7 this won't affect you personally, but  
8 it will affect our future. It affects  
9 our students, and you should probably  
10 think about how we can put this into  
11 their hands. Instead of saying we're  
12 going to eliminate and reduce bus  
13 routes, what if you pose the question,  
14 students, how can we fix this problem?  
15 They have come up with some brilliant  
16 out of the box ideas that we as adults  
17 don't always think of, and we keep  
18 ourselves boxed in.

19 Please post the question.  
20 Our students are brilliant. Thank you  
21 for your time.

22 MS. SANTOS:

23 Thank you for speaking.  
24 If you registered to speak between  
25 11:00 to 12:00, we can take you now if

1       you just raise your hand. Yes, go - - -  
2       go ahead, ma'am. You have three  
3       minutes - - - you'll have three minutes  
4       to speak, and we'll let you know when  
5       you have one minute remaining.

6                   MS. SAGE:

7                   My name is Sharon Sage,  
8       S-H-A-R-O-N S-A-G-E. I'm a diabetic  
9       and cancer survivor. I used ACCESS to  
10      get to and from my radiation and - - -  
11      and brachytherapy sessions, 25 of them  
12      outside of the hospital.

13                  Two years ago, I rode the  
14      regular Port Authority buses with  
15      cataracts. I was almost blind. I used  
16      the mail box as a marker one stop  
17      before coming back. One stop before my  
18      stop. Coming back from Oakland, I used  
19      the lighted kiosk as a marker one stop  
20      before getting off the bus. I then  
21      walked the eight to nine blocks to my  
22      sister's house where I paid half the  
23      household expenses. I fell into a  
24      pothole one time. I was that blind.

25                  My sister occasionally

1 drives me places, but she's in physical  
2 rehab and hospitals off and on since  
3 June, and I can't carry her oxygen  
4 tanks when she comes home. I take the  
5 ACCESS van because I have bandages on  
6 my legs due to swelling from diabetes.  
7 I am unable to walk the eight to nine  
8 blocks to the bus stop. In fact, I use  
9 the ACCESS van's lift a lot because of  
10 the swelling, or the front seat of a  
11 ACCESS cab.

12 The van allows me to go  
13 grocery shopping, make doctor and other  
14 medical appointments, to attend church,  
15 and go to library functions. Soon I'd  
16 like to go to Vintage Senior Services  
17 recommended by medical staff for  
18 exercise. Next year, I'd like to go to  
19 Cancer Survivors for a nine week  
20 session for survivors. I'd like to  
21 attend theater productions in the  
22 cultural district and attend a movie at  
23 the waterfront.

24 I'm not sure if, you're  
25 going to cut off these buses at 11:00,

1 I'll be able to get home after such  
2 endeavors. I am dependent on public  
3 transportation, but this zTrip and Uber  
4 are too expensive to use a lot. For  
5 the number of doctor visits I have, the  
6 cost would be prohibitive. Should I  
7 have to be independent living next  
8 year, I'm not sure which location would  
9 have public transportation, especially  
10 ACCESS to get to and from places if you  
11 cut it.

12 Thank you for hearing my  
13 story. Don't cut ACCESS opportunities  
14 too much. I'm dependent on it. And a  
15 number of seniors, especially those in  
16 wheelchairs, personally need the  
17 ACCESS. Thank you.

18 MS. SANTOS:

19 Thank you for speaking.

20 Anyone else scheduled  
21 between 11:00 to 12:00 to speak, we can  
22 take you now. Any students that would  
23 like to speak, we can also take you  
24 now.

25 Yes. Yes, you can go

1 ahead. Can you please state - - - ?

2 MS. KELLEMAN:

3 Are you double dipping?

4 Iklas, right?

5 MS. DAVIS:

6 Yes, ma'am.

7 MS. KELLEMAN:

8 Good to see you again.

9 MR. DAVIS:

10 Thank you.

11 MS. SANTOS:

12 Please state your name  
13 again, and we'll have - - - you'll have  
14 three minutes to speak.

15 MR. DAVIS:

16 Yes, ma'am. Hi, my  
17 name's Iklas Davis. I was up here a  
18 couple minutes ago.

19 There's a couple  
20 solutions that can help, sorry.  
21 There's a couple solutions that's able  
22 to help Port Authority with - - - with  
23 funding and stuff. There's sponsors.  
24 There's also certain types of ways.

25 A teacher told - - - a

1 teacher told us in class, go by Ms.  
2 Turk, says something about how the T is  
3 also free going to, I forget the  
4 destinations, but it's --- it's free to  
5 get there. There's other --- there's  
6 other certain ways to, like, put  
7 funding and put money into Port  
8 Authority's pockets, like a quarter. A  
9 quarter to --- to take the T. Like, no  
10 one will really be like, okay, it's a  
11 quarter.

12 But at the end of the  
13 day, every quarter that's proposed and  
14 put into every single stop, it's \$0.50  
15 cents each day and no matter what, the  
16 --- the money will go up.

17 What I'm asking is that,  
18 why not ask the people? What are some  
19 solutions to be able to help out, to  
20 help put money into the Port  
21 Authority's? Yes, there are some cons  
22 when --- when it comes to buses, like  
23 the --- some people that don't pay or  
24 how there's elderly, but that's not a  
25 con. The elderly need to get to place

1 by place each and every day. At the  
2 end of the day, no matter what, we need  
3 to help out the future. And what we're  
4 not - - - what we're doing now is not  
5 helping the future.

6 Again, with climate  
7 change, there's also a lot of  
8 pollution. There's a lot of carbon  
9 dioxide going into the air. With every  
10 single car in traffic, and we can all  
11 say traffic in Pittsburgh sucks no  
12 matter what. It's not going to be able  
13 to - - - it's not going to help out.  
14 There's going to be more and more  
15 traffic each and every day. More  
16 carbonation in the air, and it's not  
17 going to do nothing but set us back a  
18 couple of years back then.

19 All I am proposing is  
20 that at the end of the day, we have - - -  
21 we have electric stuff. We have - - - we  
22 have solar powers. We have so many  
23 other things. Why not ask the people  
24 what can we do to provide for Port  
25 Authority instead of cutting all these



1 bus lines and making it more difficult  
2 to understand that we're --- we're all  
3 human? We need to go place by place.

4 Thank you for letting me  
5 speak.

6 MS. KELLEMAN:

7 Thank you, Mr. Davis.

8 MS. SANTOS:

9 Thank you for speaking.

10 Is there anyone else  
11 scheduled between 11:00 to 12:00?  
12 Okay.

13 MS. KELLEMAN:

14 Michael, did you want to  
15 speak to us again?

16 MS. SANTOS:

17 Yeah.

18 MR. HATGELAKAS:

19 Brian.

20 MS. KELLEMAN:

21 Brian, I am so sorry.

22 MS. SANTOS:

23 Brian.

24 MS. KELLEMAN:

25 Thank you, Brian.

1                   MS. SANTOS:

2                   Okay.

3                   MR. HATGELAKAS:

4                   Yes.

5                   MS. KELLEMAN:

6                   Brian from the South  
7                   Hills.

8                   MR. HATGELAKAS:

9                   Thank you. Sorry ---  
10                  sorry about that. Thank you. Who's  
11                  that, Darcy? Thank you, sir.

12                  Good morning again. My  
13                  name is Brian. I was thinking of ideas  
14                  while I was listening to people talk  
15                  here this morning. And what about  
16                  having some of our sports teams help  
17                  fund the Port Authority and fund  
18                  different places? Like, you have the  
19                  71 that goes downtown and you have  
20                  other routes that go downtown towards  
21                  the arena. Why not put sponsorships on  
22                  those routes, like the Penguins route,  
23                  the Pirates route, and the Steelers  
24                  route, of course. You know, that way  
25                  they could fund money and raise money

1 to help better service because we, as  
2 the people who are fans of the sports,  
3 take the --- can take the service to  
4 see the games. If --- you get what I'm  
5 talking about?

6 And also, my question is,  
7 wasn't casino money supposed to go help  
8 the Port Authority in a long term  
9 crunch? Because I remember back when  
10 the casinos were being. When the  
11 casinos were being thought of, and I  
12 --- I remember they were. When the  
13 casinos were being --- the casinos were  
14 being public transit and --- and  
15 funding was a yes vote on --- on why I  
16 wanted them in --- in this state.

17 So we --- we have to  
18 think outside the box. Not just  
19 students, but everybody needs to to  
20 help save our services. And there's a  
21 lot of stuff we could do. Thank you.

22 MS. KELLEMAN:

23 Thank you, Brian.

24 MS. SANTOS:

25 Thank you. Is there

1 anyone here that's scheduled to speak  
2 between 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. that would  
3 like to go earlier? I know that's  
4 ahead, but we have some room.

5 Okay. Okay.

6 Please state your name.  
7 You'll have three minutes to speak, and  
8 we'll let you know when you have one  
9 minute remaining.

10 MS. DEAROLF:

11 Hello, my name is Colleen  
12 Dearolf. And I live in Allentown near  
13 Mount Oliver and Mount Washington. And  
14 I depend on the buses to get to the  
15 store, to my appointments, and other  
16 things. So, I wanted just to say that  
17 please don't cut the funding. Okay?

18 I'm short and sweet, to  
19 the point. Okay? Thank you.

20 MS. KELLEMAN:

21 Thank you.

22 MS. SANTOS:

23 Thank you for speaking.

24 Okay. Okay.

25 We do have time, so if

1       you would like to speak again, sir.

2       Yes, go ahead.

3                   MS. KELLEMAN:

4                   Mr. Ross Mitchell.

5                   MS. SANTOS:

6                   Okay.

7                   We'll take --- we'll take  
8       you, sir, first, and then we'll take  
9       you.

10                  MR. MITCHELL:

11                  Hi, Ross Mitchell again.

12                  I just wanted to give  
13       some encouragement. Not just to the  
14       Board, but to all of us who are here.  
15       And hopefully, however you guys had  
16       your sign, this may be transmitted  
17       otherwise.

18                  Several years ago, Port  
19       Authority was having public hearings.  
20       This one was held at your downtown  
21       headquarters. They do listen to us. I  
22       made a suggestion that there should be  
23       pay enter system wide. Pay enter  
24       system wide. Because at that time, it  
25       wasn't. It had a lot of shenanigans

1 going on, but they actually implemented  
2 that.

3 So when we speak, they do  
4 hear us. And they also been hearing us  
5 a lot on, we must have service after  
6 11:00. So, I'm hoping something can be  
7 worked out where we can, even if you  
8 pick certain routes that have high - - -  
9 high need for the workers,  
10 entertainment, service after 11:00.  
11 And like I said, you took on the pay  
12 enter system and it seemed to work.  
13 And I'm glad I was able to suggest  
14 that.

15 So, thanks for the extra  
16 time.

17 MS. SANTOS:

18 Thank you for speaking.

19 We'll take you, ma'am.

20 Thank you. Again, you only have three  
21 minutes to speak, and we'll let you  
22 know when you have one minute  
23 remaining. Thank you.

24 MS. WEHE:

25 Hello, I'm Nancy. I was

1 just up before.

2 I would like to make a  
3 comment. I hope they do not, because I  
4 take ACCESS to the bingo. I go, like,  
5 a couple times a month. And I usually  
6 have a pickup like, you know, they ---  
7 they call you prior to your pickup.  
8 And then they usually pick you up like  
9 10:15. I do not hope they don't  
10 alleviate the ACCESS van because it  
11 takes me to the bingo, and I enjoy  
12 that. That's an activity.

13 So, I wanted to comment  
14 about that. I know they're going to  
15 increase the ACCESS fare because I had  
16 a flyer. So, I wanted to tell you. I  
17 wanted to tell you that --- that I  
18 enjoy taking ACCESS, and it --- and it  
19 --- and it gets me to the. That's the  
20 only place I can go. So, I enjoy  
21 taking ACCESS, too. Okay, thank you  
22 very much.

23 MS. KELLEMAN:

24 Thank you.

25 MS. SANTOS:

1 Thank you for speaking.

2 Okay.

3 There's, yes, go ahead.

4 There's a - - - yes, go ahead. You can  
5 go ahead. Thank you. Please state  
6 your name. You'll have three minutes  
7 to speak, and we'll let you know when  
8 you have one minute remaining.

9 MS. GLYMOUR:

10 Thank you. My name is  
11 Madelyn Glymour. I am a lifelong  
12 Pittsburgher, and the daughter of a  
13 lifelong Pittsburgher, and we both take  
14 the bus nearly every day. I'm also a  
15 person who deeply misses the 500 route,  
16 if anybody here remembers that one.

17 Pittsburgh is a city of  
18 industry, supposedly. Whether that  
19 industry is steel, healthcare, or  
20 technology. Pittsburgh is a city that  
21 has prided itself on building the  
22 future. It's easy to think that the  
23 future now is entirely built by and on  
24 computers, but it's people who make  
25 healthcare decisions and people who



1 create technology. Not just doctors  
2 and software engineers, but nurses,  
3 physical therapists, aides,  
4 technicians, IT workers, cooks,  
5 janitors, security, secretaries, and  
6 countless others are necessary to make  
7 Pittsburgh's industry work.

8                   These people, whether  
9 they live in Squirrel Hill, Penn Hills,  
10 or the Hill District, need  
11 transportation to connect them to the  
12 places where they work, often well  
13 after 11:00 p.m., especially in  
14 healthcare care. Many of them do not  
15 have or cannot afford cars, but they  
16 still need a way to be connected to the  
17 places that they work and live their  
18 lives.

19                   Public transportation is  
20 the lifeblood of the City and the  
21 engine that drives us into the future.  
22 It makes Pittsburgh closer, safer, more  
23 productive, and more connected. It is  
24 not an optional part of our city, and  
25 it must be funded. Thank you very

1 much.

2 MS. SANTOS:

3 Thank you for your time.

4 Is there anyone here  
5 scheduled between 11:00 to 12:00 p.m.  
6 that would like to speak? Anyone here  
7 from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. that would  
8 like to speak? That's scheduled for  
9 11:00 to 12:00 p.m.? Yes, sir, we can  
10 take you.

11 Can you please state your  
12 name? Gentleman with the blue.

13 MR. NEAL:

14 Can I ask a question?

15 MS. SANTOS:

16 So, this is only ---  
17 we're only taking public hearing  
18 comments. The Board members would not  
19 be able to answer the questions.

20 MS. KELLEMAN:

21 But Mr. Neal, if we take  
22 a break shortly, we're happy to come  
23 talk to you.

24 MR. NEAL:

25 I'll speak with my

1 Senator.

2 SENATOR WILLIAMS:

3 I - - - I'm happy to speak  
4 to you.

5 MS. KELLEMAN:

6 Oh, my goodness.

7 SENATOR WILLIAMS:

8 Got it.

9 MS. SANTOS:

10 If you would like to  
11 speak, but have not registered to  
12 speak, we encourage you to go register  
13 outside at one of the tables in the  
14 lobby.

15 Has Terry Neal spoken?  
16 Okay, sorry, sir. You were scheduled  
17 for 11:30, and it showed up again. We  
18 can also take Jeremy Shaffer. Okay,  
19 thank you. You'll have three minutes  
20 to speak, and we'll let you know when  
21 you have one minute remaining.

22 MR. SHAFFER:

23 All right.

24 Greetings. Thank you for  
25 doing this public hearing. My name is

1       Jeremy Shaffer. I live in Gibsonia in  
2       the North Hills. So, I am the  
3       represent - - - State Representative for  
4       the 28th Legislative District, which  
5       covers Marshall, Bradford, Woods, Pine,  
6       Richland, West Deer, and most of  
7       Hampton Township.

8               So, my district is  
9       actually a transit desert I like to  
10      say. We do not have any bus lines that  
11      come up into my area. Myself and my  
12      legislative assistant, we just took the  
13      12. We drove to the McKnight Road Park  
14      and Ride, took the 12 down. Pretty  
15      seamless, but it still took us about an  
16      hour and 15 minutes to get from the  
17      McKnight Road parking lot to downtown  
18      Pittsburgh.

19             I would like to encourage  
20      you at the PRT to actually take the R,  
21      regional part of the name, and to make  
22      that a reality. People in my district  
23      are just as likely to go from Wexford  
24      to Cranberry as they are to go from  
25      Wexford to downtown or increasingly

1 more so Wexford to Oakland, Wexford to  
2 the airport, Gibsonia. There - - -  
3 there's lots of different points that  
4 people go to increasingly because of  
5 the hybrid work environment and work  
6 centers that are developing out by the  
7 airport or in South Point, different  
8 places around the whole region. Those  
9 trips take people further and further  
10 away.

11 I think, as we all know,  
12 the City of Pittsburgh's lost over 50  
13 percent of its population in the past  
14 50 or 60 years. So we have seen, while  
15 our region has basically stagnated in  
16 terms of population, it's actually  
17 spread out more throughout the county  
18 and throughout the region. So I would  
19 encourage PRT to think big, to look out  
20 as a ten year plan that takes account  
21 of the technologies that we have  
22 coming. We have a lot of very smart  
23 people, a lot of great companies here  
24 in Pittsburgh with autonomous vehicles.

25 You can see, I - - - I,

1       when I went to Carnegie Mellon, I  
2       extensively used Port Authority at the  
3       time, utilizing things like the 61C to  
4       be able to get from Squirrel Hill down  
5       to Carnegie Mellon. And so, I see  
6       there's a real value, especially in the  
7       high density areas, for public transit.  
8       And for the City of Pittsburgh, for our  
9       region to truly live up to its  
10      potential to be a world class region,  
11      we need a good transportation system.  
12      And when I say transportation system,  
13      I'm referring to roads, bridges,  
14      airport, transit, ports to be able to  
15      have that. So you all are a key part  
16      of helping our region reach its  
17      potential, and I encourage you to think  
18      big and truly embrace the whole region.  
19      Because those of us, especially on the  
20      periphery of Allegheny County, lack  
21      critical service that we need. Thank  
22      you.

23                   MS. SANTOS:

24                   Thank you for speaking.

25                   We'll now take a ten

1 minute break. So we will return at  
2 11:42 --- let's make it 11:45, round  
3 number. Thank you.

4 ---

5 (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS TAKEN  
6 DURING THE PROCEEDING.)

7 ---

8 BEN:

9 Okay.

10 so next up we have Cocoa  
11 Lindley.

12 MS. LINDLEY:

13 My name is Cocoa Lindley.  
14 I am a nurse who works throughout the  
15 Allegheny County and the outer  
16 counties. I depend on transit,  
17 normally work night shift, but also  
18 work second shift at times.

19 The service reductions  
20 would be very detrimental to most shift  
21 workers such as myself. I already  
22 often walk two to three miles to places  
23 where, had it been 15 years ago, I  
24 could have front door service. For  
25 example, in Plum Boro, Oakmont, I have

1 to walk all the way up Halton Road to  
2 work overnight at the nursing  
3 facilities up there, which I'm willing  
4 to do. It's much safer for me to ride  
5 the bus after an overnight shift than  
6 to attempt to drive.

7 I am a choice rider, have  
8 CDL holder, very capable of driving.  
9 But as a night shift worker and as a  
10 woman, I just would rather take the bus  
11 overnight. And I would hope that there  
12 would be some sort of funding stream to  
13 at least retain service, if not grow  
14 our service. Thank you.

15 BEN:

16 Thank you. Next we have  
17 Nate Budziszewski. Nate, you have  
18 three minutes. We'll let you know with  
19 one minute left.

20 MR. BUDZISZEWSKI:

21 Hi. I live in Bethel  
22 Park. I've worked as a teacher at City  
23 Charter High School downtown for the  
24 last 15 years. A major part of why we  
25 moved to Bethel was to have access to



1 the light rail and the trolley.  
2 Traffic's never an issue. And not  
3 having to rely on a car and all the  
4 costs and maintenance that go with that  
5 has been a big part of our life.

6 It's also been a source  
7 of pride where friends who live in  
8 other parts of town only wish they  
9 could have that kind of asset in their  
10 neighborhoods and that kind of access  
11 to downtown, sporting events, just  
12 anything. So it's really unfortunate  
13 to even hear talks about making these  
14 cuts when, if anything, we should be  
15 looking at ways to expand its services.

16 I've already seen how,  
17 like, the recent maintenance on the  
18 lines can have a big impact on  
19 services. My commute's longer. It  
20 impacts what time I can get to school,  
21 what time I can leave. I have two  
22 little girls at home. I have to leave  
23 earlier, which I miss them in the  
24 mornings. I arrive later, which  
25 impacts their after school and

1 extracurricular sports. Everything  
2 like that. That puts a hardship on my  
3 wife, who now is their primary person  
4 to drive around. And, you know, I'll  
5 make it when I can.

6 And so, I hope a solution  
7 can be found that doesn't involve  
8 cutting these routes, cutting these  
9 services, and if anything, like was  
10 said earlier, expanding it or bringing  
11 back prior lines that are a necessary  
12 lifeline for students, workers,  
13 families, everybody. Thank you.

14 BEN:

15 Thank you. Next up, we  
16 have four just entries for City  
17 Charter. I don't have a name for them.  
18 Do we have a registered member for City  
19 Charter? Okay, thank you very much.

20 Do we have anybody else  
21 that is registered to speak before  
22 noon? If we have nobody else before  
23 noon, at noon we have Chloe Isabella.  
24 Is she present yet? Is there anybody  
25 else in the 12 o'clock hour registered

1       that would like to go early?

2               While we're waiting on  
3       our next speakers, if anybody has not  
4       registered and would like to speak, you  
5       can come up and do that and register.  
6       Register afterwards in the lobby.

7               So, please state your  
8       name. I wasn't here for the first  
9       time. And again, you have three  
10      minutes. We'll let you know with one  
11      minute remaining.

12              MR. ELLSWORTH:

13              Okay.

14              My name is Alex  
15      Ellsworth, A-L-E-X E-L-L-S-W-O-R-T-H.

16              And while I've been  
17      listening to some of these people  
18      speak, I've been thinking of some  
19      solutions, and one I thought of is  
20      having on vehicle tap to pay. So let's  
21      say, for example, you're going on to  
22      the T. You have three options to pay.  
23      You have the option where you can have  
24      the app on your phone and then you scan  
25      the actual code, which requires

1 additional setup. You can have a  
2 connect card or a ticket, or you can  
3 have cash.

4 Now if --- main method  
5 that a lot of people use is cash. And  
6 if you don't have cash, what happens?  
7 Well, you don't pay. You get a ride,  
8 and obviously that's not a good thing  
9 for the company. So if you have on  
10 vehicle tap to pay with, like, Apple  
11 Pay and Google Pay, it doesn't require  
12 any additional setup. It's as easy as  
13 taking your phone out of your pocket,  
14 putting it on, and then you've already  
15 paid. So that makes it a lot easier  
16 for people to pay if they don't have  
17 cash or a connect card already. Thank  
18 you.

19 BEN:

20 Thank you. We have a few  
21 more minutes 'till our next registered  
22 speakers. So I'll give everyone  
23 another round of, if there's anybody in  
24 the 12 o'clock hour that is registered  
25 that would like to go early, can come

1 up.

2 So we have a new  
3 registrant, Chris Rieger. That's who  
4 just walked in. You can come down.  
5 Please state your name on the mic, and  
6 you will have three minutes. We'll let  
7 you know when one minute's remaining.

8 MR. RIEGER:

9 Thank you very much.  
10 That was quick. Thank you, and good  
11 afternoon. My name again is Chris  
12 Rieger. I reside in Dormont. I  
13 currently sit on Dormont Borough  
14 Council.

15 Our municipality of 8,200  
16 people sits in the South Hills, nestled  
17 just south of Beechview in just three  
18 quarters of a square mile. We are the  
19 fourth most densely populated  
20 municipality in the entire  
21 Commonwealth, more so than  
22 Philadelphia. We are serviced  
23 currently by the 41 bus route as well  
24 as not one, not two, but three T  
25 stations.

1                   Needless to say, the  
2           proposed service cuts and rate hikes  
3           will be nothing short of devastating,  
4           both for our community as well as our  
5           neighbors in the South Hills. You can  
6           literally throw a baseball from my  
7           front porch to the tracks and platform  
8           at Potomac Station. I see multiple  
9           times daily how foot traffic going to  
10          and from our stop indicates just how  
11          vital and essential public transit is  
12          to our Borough and so many other  
13          communities.

14                   Half of our residents are  
15          renters, and as such, many rely on  
16          public transit for basic living. Going  
17          to and from work, accompanying their  
18          children to extracurricular activities,  
19          grocery shopping, you name it. But to  
20          be clear, service reduction doesn't  
21          just affect renters or those living  
22          close to a light rail station or a bus  
23          stop. Many from outside our community  
24          utilize these services to take  
25          advantage of amenities in and around

1 the City. Attending concerts and  
2 sporting events on the North Shore,  
3 going to a show in the cultural  
4 district, whatever.

5 Moreover, service  
6 reduction does not even just affect  
7 those who even use it sparingly.  
8 Service cuts and rate hikes mean  
9 businesses in and around the city hurt.  
10 It means increased commute times for  
11 those living in the suburbs who think  
12 these cuts will not affect them. It  
13 means more hazardous traffic. And  
14 believe me when I say that more  
15 treacherous and congested traffic on  
16 West Liberty Avenue and Banksville Road  
17 is the last thing that our area wants.

18 Service cuts can also  
19 affect public policy, critical issues  
20 like housing. I saw a couple of weeks  
21 ago that you sent out a press release  
22 regarding our TOD location at Dormont  
23 Junction, part of the culmination of  
24 our Borough's zoning rewrite a few  
25 years ago. Service cuts may very well

1     affect the viability of that project,  
2     which would further stunt the  
3     development of additional affordable  
4     housing.

5                     And to those who say  
6     restoration of funding to pre-pandemic  
7     levels is not justified because of a  
8     reduction in ridership, I'm of the  
9     mindset that the more adequately you  
10    fund public services and public  
11    amenities, the more people will use  
12    them. Our reps in Harrisburg need to  
13    understand this, and if the political  
14    will in Harrisburg is not there to find  
15    a solution, then our policymakers at  
16    the county level need to get back to  
17    the table and find creative ways to  
18    fund the gap and deliver on essential  
19    public service that directly and  
20    indirectly affects us all, whether we  
21    realize it or not. Thank you very  
22    much.

23                     BEN:

24                     Thank you, Chris. Looks  
25    like we've gotten the four speakers



1 registered for City Charter. I don't  
2 have specific names, so if the group  
3 from City Charter has organized, we'll  
4 take the first speaker.

5 MS. KELLEMAN:

6 Okay.

7 Good afternoon, City  
8 Charter students. How you guys doing?  
9 You're so quiet, you're killing me.  
10 Who has been to a public hearing  
11 before? Well, a couple of you. Okay,  
12 great.

13 So, the purpose of this  
14 hearing is you come up, you get a three  
15 minute window. We don't talk to you.  
16 It's not because we don't want to.  
17 It's because the point of this is to  
18 give --- to get your --- your comments  
19 on the record. We can come talk to you  
20 separately, but we'll ask you to come  
21 up. You're going to state your name.  
22 You can spell it if you want to, for  
23 the record. And then you get three  
24 minutes to talk. And then your friends  
25 will clap and wave your signs, which

1 are really great.

2 So, Ms. Welch, do you  
3 have anyone who would like to go first?

4 BEN:

5 When you come up, if you  
6 could state your name?

7 MS. KELLEMAN:

8 You're at the podium,  
9 Leah.

10 BEN:

11 Wait, no you're ---  
12 you're good. Relax. At the podium,  
13 state your name. You'll have three  
14 minutes, and we'll let you know when  
15 you have one minute left.

16 MS. PARTRIDGE:

17 Okay.

18 Hi, my name's Leah  
19 Partridge, L-E-A-H-P A-R-T-R-I-D-G-E.

20 My name is Leah. I'm a  
21 student at City Charter High School.  
22 With the PRT bus changes, I would no  
23 longer be able to easily attend high  
24 school, cosmetology school, work part  
25 time, or attend things like athletics,

1 religious activities, or socialize  
2 outdoors with friends, or be able to  
3 afford public transit. With the delays  
4 in time schedule, I also will have to  
5 cut my working and socialization hours  
6 drastically. That's all I have. Thank  
7 you for your time.

8 MS. KELLEMAN:

9 Thank you.

10 BEN:

11 Thank you.

12 MR. JAMES:

13 Hello. My name is  
14 Avontay James, A-V-O-N-T-A-Y, and I am  
15 a senior student from City Charter High  
16 School. And I would like to talk about  
17 the potentiality of the public transit  
18 system getting cut off or limited.

19 Firstly, I would like to  
20 wonder, do any of you guys use public  
21 transit? Do any of you have loved  
22 family members or anybody you care  
23 about or love that rides the buses in  
24 general? Because I do. Have you  
25 waited in the cold for extremely unfair

1 amounts of time to get home? You know,  
2 I have and so have many of my family  
3 members.

4 So I would like --- I'm  
5 wondering how any of this affects any  
6 of you guys at all. And I would like  
7 to say, the state's budget is handled  
8 poorly and it's shown clearly by the  
9 lack of time put into this choice and  
10 decision.

11 BEN:

12 Thank you. Do we have  
13 another student?

14 MS. PETERS:

15 Hello, my name's Aniyah,  
16 Peters, A-N-I-Y-A-H P-E-T-E-R-S.

17 My name is Aniyah Peters,  
18 and I go to City Charter High school.  
19 Public transit is important to me  
20 because it is an affordable system that  
21 helps me get around the city. Without  
22 transit, it will be harder to get where  
23 I need to be, such as school and work.  
24 Without a ride, I would not be able to  
25 get to school, work, and will have to

1 find my own transportation, which can  
2 take time and sometimes money.

3 Money that I don't have.  
4 More money than you would usually use  
5 to get on a bus. No public transit can  
6 cause people to be late to jobs, to  
7 lose their jobs, and just sometimes  
8 just might not make it to their  
9 destination. How am I going to get to  
10 work? How am I going to get to school?  
11 We need public transportation so we can  
12 get to our destination.

13 That's it. Thank you.

14 MR. MONTROYA:

15 Hello. My name is Joshua  
16 Montoya, but you can literally just  
17 call me Josh. It's a lot shorter. And  
18 I am a student at City Charter High  
19 School for talking about public  
20 transportation.

21 And why I think public  
22 transportation is important because it  
23 could be helpful for me and to you.  
24 Why? Because - - - because if we don't  
25 own our own personal vehicles, we can

1       literally be having trouble getting ---  
2       getting to our homes, into our job,  
3       places that --- that we work at. And  
4       it could be having trouble for you with  
5       our lives, just like for me or for you  
6       if you're having this trouble kind of  
7       --- kind of situation that you're  
8       having. And that's mostly it for me  
9       also.

10                   BEN:

11                   Thank you, Josh. We have  
12                   some more time between our --- oh,  
13                   that's exactly what I was just about to  
14                   ask for.

15                   MS. CHAPMAN:

16                   Hi. I'm sorry, this was  
17                   very, like, last minute, but hi, my  
18                   name is Zahara Chapman, Z-A-H-A-R-A.  
19                   Chapman, C-H-A-P-M-A-N. I'm a senior  
20                   at City Charter High School, and I've  
21                   been attending there for four years.  
22                   For those four years, I have been  
23                   taking public transportation and I've  
24                   relied on public transportation to get  
25                   around for those four years and many to

1       come, depending on, you know, money.

2                       But to add on, a lot of  
3       people use the bus. From tourists to  
4       people who work and along with children  
5       just learning their way around the  
6       city. I feel as if this cuts - - - this  
7       gets cut and the buses take longer to  
8       get there, people's time would have to  
9       be cut in severe amounts, and that  
10      could really be detrimental to the  
11      working class considering they have to  
12      be there at a very strict time. So, I  
13      would just like to say just think about  
14      the working class, considering that  
15      they all have a role in how we operate  
16      to our day-to-day lives. That'll be  
17      it. Thank you.

18                   BEN:

19                   Okay.

20                       Before we move on, I  
21      would like to go back to see if we have  
22      Chloe Isabella present? She was  
23      registered at noon. If we don't have  
24      Chloe, are there any more students from  
25      City Charter? We don't have any more

1 students from City Charter. We can  
2 move on.

3 This is a little early,  
4 but is Libby Powers ready to speak? Do  
5 we have anybody else in the 12 o'clock  
6 hour that would be --- like to speak  
7 early? If you could please let us know  
8 your name, you will have three minutes.  
9 We'll let you know with one minute to  
10 go. Thank you.

11 MS. ENGLAND:

12 Certainly. Hi, I am  
13 Jennifer England, Vice President of  
14 External Affairs at 412 Food Rescue.

15 We believe that good food  
16 belongs to people, not landfills. And  
17 we rescue food from businesses that  
18 would otherwise go to waste and deliver  
19 it to people facing food insecurity.  
20 Eighty (80) to 90 percent of the food  
21 that we rescue is fresh. Therefore, we  
22 work with organizations outside the  
23 traditional charitable food system of  
24 food banks and pantries, like job  
25 training programs and Head Start



1 locations, in order to get fresh food  
2 where it can be used quickly.

3 In 2024 alone, our  
4 organization delivered 4.7 million  
5 pounds of food and recovered that food  
6 to over 500 nonprofit locations. Most  
7 of those were non-traditional access  
8 points that help us bring food within  
9 reach for many people in Allegheny  
10 County. However, food is only in reach  
11 if people can get there.

12 A key pillar of our  
13 mission is partnering with --- with  
14 non-charitable food system  
15 organizations and food apartheid in low  
16 income communities to increase access  
17 to fresh food. And these are the very  
18 areas impacted by the proposed cuts.  
19 Our on staff data scientists analyzed  
20 the impact of these route cuts, and  
21 found that approximately 22,000 people  
22 live within a walkshed of these routes.  
23 Nearly 10,000 of those live within a  
24 tract that's considered to be a food  
25 apartheid or food desert tract. And a

1 third of those are combined --- living  
2 in combined low income and low access  
3 areas.

4 Public transit isn't just  
5 a commuting concern. It is also a  
6 serious food security issue. A  
7 significant portion of our partner  
8 locations rely on public transit for  
9 both distributing food donations and  
10 client access. The proposed transit  
11 cuts jeopardize the flow of food into  
12 those communities by restricting the  
13 ability of clients to reach these  
14 nonprofit sites, amplifying existing  
15 barriers to food security.

16 A shocking number of our  
17 distribution partners are directly  
18 along the routes slated for  
19 elimination. Again, looking at the  
20 impacted service area in 2024, 171 of  
21 our nonprofit partner organizations are  
22 in those areas. Twenty-nine (29) would  
23 be completely inaccessible via bus, and  
24 142 of them would become significantly  
25 less accessible.

1                   These organizations  
2     represent nearly a quarter of our  
3     distribution with over 1.2 million  
4     pounds of food distributed in those  
5     areas, and about 200,000 pounds of  
6     food, or 166,000 meals, were  
7     distributed by those organizations that  
8     would become inaccessible with these  
9     transit cuts.

10                  As a side note, our  
11     partners in Philadelphia Philly Food  
12     Rescue are facing similar catastrophic  
13     impacts due to service cuts. So we  
14     urge the Pennsylvania legislator ---  
15     legislature to take steps to ensure  
16     that access to food, medical care,  
17     jobs, and other critical services are  
18     kept intact. Transportation is  
19     literally the first step for residents  
20     of Allegheny County and the  
21     Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on a path  
22     to basic sustenance, good health, and  
23     prosperity.

24                  Thank you. I rushed. I  
25     have a written copy of that that also

1 includes the GIS charts that we  
2 assembled.

3 MS. KELLEMAN:

4 Thank you.

5 BEN:

6 Thank you. Take care.

7 Thank you very much. We'll go back and  
8 check. Is Chloe, would Chloe like to  
9 speak? Chloe Isabella? Okay.

10 We'll move on to Libby  
11 Powers. Is Libby Powers checked in,  
12 like to speak? Jay Walker?

13 Ma'am, would you like?

14 MS. SAGE:

15 I was here before, but I  
16 had an idea that's creative. I was  
17 thinking, I told several people, but  
18 I've added on. So it might get lost in  
19 the computer used, but the idea is to  
20 have a competition with the high school  
21 students because the teachers have said  
22 they came up with ideas and/or a  
23 competition with the college students.  
24 And have the --- have the sports teams  
25 sponsor the prize so that a scholarship

1       could be raised for one of the prize  
2       winners.

3                       Maybe you come up with  
4       other ideas for the prizes, but with  
5       the incentive you might come up with  
6       some really creative ideas outside the  
7       box. I thought you guys were sitting  
8       here bored waiting for people, so I  
9       thought I'd just tell you that idea.

10                    BEN:

11                    Can we have your name  
12       again, ma'am?

13                    MS. KELLEMAN:

14                    And Ms. Sage, correct?  
15       So we have your name for the record,  
16       Ms. Sage?

17                    MS. SAGE:

18                    My name's Sharon Sage.

19                    MS. KELLEMAN:

20                    Sharon Sage. Yes, ma'am.  
21       Thank you.

22                    BEN:

23                    Yeah. We'll check with  
24       Libby Powers again. Do we have Libby  
25       Powers? Jay Walker? Giovanni

1 Montagnino? Kelda Gorman? Gentlemen  
2 with the sound, can we have the mic at  
3 the table? Okay.

4 MS. KELLEMAN:

5 Great. Thank you, Darcy.

6 MS. GORMAN:

7 My name is Kelda Gorman.  
8 I'm a disabled Allegheny County  
9 resident. And these cuts would impact  
10 everything from my ability to access  
11 food, medical care, religious services,  
12 pretty much everything. Because I'm  
13 not medically allowed to obtain a  
14 license. And I don't really, can't  
15 really mentally or physically afford  
16 medically to not have access to those  
17 things.

18 So, that's what I'm here  
19 to try to fight for. So we can stop  
20 these cuts. Thank you.

21 BEN:

22 All right.

23 We'll run through  
24 starting from, back from noon again.  
25 Chloe? Libby? Libby Powers? Jay

1 Walker? Giovanni Montagnino? Amy  
2 Zaiss?

3 Is anybody present who  
4 would like to speak registered so you  
5 can speak early? Or if not, we'd ask  
6 you that you would just register after  
7 you speak.

8 Good afternoon. If you  
9 could please state your name at the  
10 microphone. We will give you three,  
11 and we'll have a sign over here to let  
12 you know when you have one minute left.

13 MS. POWERS:

14 My name is Libby Powers,  
15 and I am from Sewickley, Pennsylvania,  
16 where I take the Ohio Valley number 14  
17 route. And that is one of the routes  
18 that is proposed to be completely  
19 eliminated.

20 To eliminate this route  
21 would drastically impact my life  
22 because I work and enjoy going out into  
23 the community and want to be able to do  
24 that freely and unrestricted. I moved  
25 back to my hometown of Sewickley

1 specifically to be able to be on the  
2 bus line. So I was able to  
3 independently navigate the community on  
4 my own without the restrictions of  
5 scheduling, such as with individuals  
6 have with paratransit. And so, to  
7 remove this route would drastically  
8 impact my ability to navigate my own  
9 community, which I feel is unfair and  
10 also unrealistic because it is the only  
11 route that goes up and down one way,  
12 and only goes. Is the only route that  
13 goes through town on a regular, timed  
14 basis.

15 We do have the Route 21  
16 bus, but that is more infrequent and  
17 does not go all the way to downtown.  
18 It goes to Stanwix Street. So, I would  
19 need the number 14 because the number  
20 14 opens my world and allows me to  
21 experience and enjoy things and to be a  
22 part of a community and be a fully  
23 active member of my community. And to  
24 have that taken away is scary because  
25 that would leave me, and among others,



1 many others, stranded and without a way  
2 to get around the community on our own  
3 schedules. And that is, to me, very  
4 frustrating and frightening because I  
5 don't have any other means of being  
6 able to get other places without public  
7 transit.

8 And I took public  
9 transit, for instance, today down here  
10 to speak with you all. And so, it is  
11 vitally important that we keep the  
12 number 14 route in service because if  
13 you take it away, you take me away.  
14 And that is not fair and is not  
15 reasonable. Because I am an active  
16 person who loves to be outside and in  
17 her own community and experiencing  
18 things downtown, like things at the  
19 cultural district and different events  
20 in other locations. So, I reason with  
21 you that I understand that the budget  
22 is important and is vitally the way  
23 that individuals and services function,  
24 and stay and function. But there has  
25 to be another way to maximize service

1 without stripping people away of their  
2 right to transportation. Thank you.

3 MS. KELLEMAN:

4 Thank you.

5 BEN:

6 Thank you very much. Do  
7 we have Kevin Cash? Kevin Cash, if you  
8 could state your name at the  
9 microphone, you will have three  
10 minutes. You can go to the podium if  
11 you'd like.

12 MR. CASH:

13 Do I repeat my name that  
14 you just stated?

15 BEN:

16 Yes. Just for the  
17 record, please. And you will have  
18 three minutes, and we'll have a sign  
19 over here to let you know with one  
20 minute left.

21 MR. CASH:

22 Okay.

23 Again, Kevin Cash, just  
24 for the record.

25 I understand one, if I am

1 not mistaken, the P7 is eliminated or  
2 will be eliminated, which is the  
3 express and is very convenient for  
4 transport from McKeesport into the  
5 City, downtown Pittsburgh. Why the  
6 total elimination? Is my question.

7 MS. KELLEMAN:

8 So sorry, Mister --- with  
9 public hearings, we take your comment  
10 at this point. We can come around ---  
11 yeah.

12 MR. CASH:

13 Oh, okay.

14 Just comments?

15 MS. KELLEMAN:

16 Yeah, yeah. But we can  
17 come around and talk to you. I don't  
18 want you to think that we.

19 MR. CASH:

20 I don't have time.

21 MS. KELLEMAN:

22 Okay.

23 MR. CASH:

24 So I'll just make  
25 comments.

1                   MS. KELLEMAN:

2                   Good, good, good.

3                   MR. CASH:

4                   I'm not good with that at  
5                   this point because I spoke of the  
6                   convenience into the City first thing  
7                   in the morning, and then later in the  
8                   day into, yeah. Early evening as well.  
9                   Inbound, both inbound and outbound.

10                  I also notice that  
11                  changes will be made where the 55  
12                  Glassport, the 56 Lincoln Place, and  
13                  the 58. No, and the 59 Mon Valley are  
14                  concerned. What I noticed --- I'm  
15                  surprised, with the Lincoln Place,  
16                  there's a major reduction. But with  
17                  the 59 Mon Valley and as well as the 55  
18                  Glassport, the --- the changes are  
19                  minor. Those two are minor, but the 56  
20                  is major. And that's a concern because  
21                  a lot of residents, myself included, in  
22                  McKeesport ride the 56. That's the  
23                  other option as far as transportation  
24                  into downtown Pittsburgh, into the  
25                  City. Whereas with the 59 and --- and

1 the 55, the reductions are minor.

2 And then there's a  
3 concern about the increased wait times.  
4 There's, I mean that's, it's vague.  
5 And that's another concern. We need  
6 --- I need, but I speak of course in,  
7 as an advocate for other riders in my  
8 area, in the McKeesport area.

9 Just need clarity. We  
10 need specifics. You know, it's, this  
11 is vague. Everything's being proposed  
12 now, and then to cut the fares as well  
13 as --- I mean cut the --- cut the  
14 service, but at the same time increase  
15 the fare. We need more clarity where  
16 that is concerned as well.

17 I'm curious about the  
18 spending as well. I --- is there  
19 public record of --- of the spending,  
20 how managed --- how day-to-day  
21 management is --- is facilitated,  
22 initiated where spending is concerned?  
23 Do we have access to that information  
24 as well as riders? In order to ---.

25 MS. KELLEMAN:

1 I'll talk to you --- do  
2 you have a minute after you're done  
3 with your comment?

4 MR. CASH:

5 Sure, sure.

6 MS. KELLEMAN:

7 I'll come talk to you.

8 MR. CASH:

9 Okay, go ahead.

10 MS. KELLEMAN:

11 Okay.

12 Let's go. Mr. Cash,

13 right?

14 MR. CASH:

15 Yes.

16 MS. KELLEMAN:

17 Okay.

18 Let's talk.

19 MR. CASH:

20 Oh, okay.

21 Wait. How much time do I

22 have?

23 MS. KELLEMAN:

24 You're done, three

25 minutes.

1                   MR. CASH:

2                   It's timeout?

3                   BEN:

4                   Yeah.

5                   MR. CASH:

6                   Okay.

7                   MS. KELLEMAN:

8                   But we got your comment,  
9                   so let's chitchat. Ms. Brown, can you  
10                  join ---?

11                  BEN:

12                  Thank you, Mr. Cash.  
13                  Let's --- is Chloe present? Dan Tracy?  
14                  Dan Tracy, if you could come up. If  
15                  you say your name in the mic, and you  
16                  will have three minutes. We'll let you  
17                  know with the sign when one minute  
18                  remaining.

19                  MR. TRACY:

20                  Oh, okay.

21                  BEN:

22                  Thank you.

23                  MR. TRACY:

24                  Hi, good afternoon. I'm  
25                  Dan Tracy. Just had a couple

1 questions, more than anything. I was  
2 wondering how long y'all have known  
3 about the shortfall in the budget?

4 BEN:

5 So sir, I will reiterate.  
6 Katherine said right now is just time  
7 to take statements from you. If  
8 there's a question that they can  
9 address, they can come with you on the  
10 side. But for up here, if we could  
11 just have statements for you, they'll  
12 listen.

13 MR. TRACY:

14 Sure.

15 BEN:

16 Listen to whatever you  
17 have to say.

18 MR. TRACY:

19 Yes.

20 MODERATOR:

21 And sir, we also have  
22 staff outside that can answer questions  
23 as well.

24 MR. TRACY:

25 Yes. I --- I already



1 spoke with them. But the issue I have  
2 is that it seems that a lot of money  
3 was spent on renaming from PAT to PRT.  
4 I'm sure that wasn't cheap. I see all  
5 the signage, the paint jobs. And if  
6 anybody foreseeing a budget would, why  
7 they would do something like that if  
8 they know they're running low on funds.  
9 I mean, I've known it as PAT for years,  
10 and I mean, why change it if it's going  
11 to cost you a fortune?

12 My second question is,  
13 why the need for your own police force  
14 when we have Pittsburgh police? I  
15 don't believe crime is different on a  
16 bus than it is on the street, in an  
17 Uber, or your home. A crime is a  
18 crime. I don't know - - - I don't  
19 understand why I constantly see Ford  
20 Explorers idling all day on a street  
21 corner with a paid officer sitting in  
22 them. And I just see money wasted  
23 everywhere.

24 And before I am forced at  
25 gunpoint to pay taxes to support public

1 transit, why they're not doing their  
2 part and, you know, working within a  
3 budget, that's about all I can say.  
4 Thank you.

5 BEN:

6 Thank you. Jay Walker.  
7 If you could restate your name in the  
8 mic, and you will have three minutes.  
9 There will be a sign over here letting  
10 you know when you have one minute left.

11 MR. WALKER:

12 Right. Hello. Good  
13 afternoon, my name is Jay Ting Walker,  
14 and I'm an outreach coordinator of the  
15 Clean Air Council, a nonprofit  
16 environmental health organization with  
17 offices in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

18 As an environmental  
19 health organization, Clean Air Council  
20 advocates for policy and infrastructure  
21 that improve air quality by promoting  
22 sustainable modes of transportation.  
23 Well-funded, efficient, and equipped  
24 public transit - - - transportation is  
25 necessary in the move towards greener

1 and healthier communities.

2 We urge you today to stop  
3 the fare hikes, stop the service cuts,  
4 and approve the necessary funds to save  
5 Pittsburgh's public transit. The 20  
6 percent cuts that have already been  
7 instituted have left transit riders  
8 with gaps in their service. As the  
9 agency works to get its rider numbers  
10 back up to 2019 levels, additional cuts  
11 of the proposed drastic amounts would  
12 halt progress and sink the agency  
13 further.

14 The state has not  
15 increased funding in a decade. It is  
16 time for Harrisburg to recognize the  
17 importance of reliable service and  
18 prioritize PRT. The plan to cut the  
19 bus and T service by 35 percent and  
20 ACCESS services by 62 percent will have  
21 devastating consequences for all,  
22 especially the most vulnerable  
23 communities that rely on affordable and  
24 accessible public transit to get to  
25 schools, groceries, hospitals, and work

1 each and every day.

2 It is imperative that the  
3 State legislature step up and close the  
4 public transit deficit, and invest in  
5 the wellbeing of its constituents. The  
6 people of Pittsburgh and across the  
7 Commonwealth deserve a healthy  
8 environment where they can thrive.  
9 Sustainable transportation is vital to  
10 making that happen. Thank you.

11 MS. SANTOS:

12 Thank you for speaking.  
13 You can hand it to them. Thank you.  
14 The next speaker, Giovanni Montagnino.  
15 Oh, thank you. Yes, we'll take you  
16 now. Okay.

17 You will have three  
18 minutes to speak, and we'll let you  
19 know when you have one minute  
20 remaining.

21 MS. KELLEMAN:

22 Good to see you again,  
23 Giovanni.

24 MR. MONTAGNINO:

25 Hi. My name is Giovanni

1 Montagnino. I live in Heidelberg,  
2 Pennsylvania. I have autism, and I ---  
3 and I relied on PRT buses for so many  
4 years.

5 The bus routes are --- I  
6 take are the 31, G2, 91, inbound 28X,  
7 and the 61C. I rely on the bus to go  
8 to work, go to the train station,  
9 airport, Kennywood, Sandcastle, more  
10 importantly, Pirate games. That's my  
11 only means of transportation --- only  
12 means of transportation to get around  
13 Pittsburgh. It saves energy and the  
14 environment.

15 When I first heard about  
16 PRT's service cuts, I was very shocked  
17 and devastated. Devastated. Ending  
18 service at 11 o'clock daily? Not fair.  
19 Closing the Collier and Ross garages  
20 --- garages and eliminating special  
21 event services, like Pirate games and  
22 the NFL draft next year. Many Pirate  
23 fans who attend games only rely on the  
24 bus. If a game ends around 10:00 p.m.  
25 hour on 7:05 games or 6:40 games, they

1 have to catch the last bus possible.  
2 Possible to head back home. If after  
3 11 o'clock if there's no more bus, they  
4 have to get an Uber or Lyft, which  
5 costs around \$15 to \$30 bucks each way.  
6 That's not fair.

7 Same it goes --- same it  
8 goes to Kennywood or Sandcastle. And  
9 people and disabilities --- have autism  
10 and disabilities or seniors, like me,  
11 rely on the bus. I can't --- not  
12 everyone drives a car. I can't afford  
13 parking fees. I can't afford Uber or a  
14 Lyft. I can't afford to sit in heavy  
15 traffic. I can't afford a lot of gas.  
16 28X inbound, very popular alternative  
17 to the G2, will no longer go around  
18 downtown or Oakland. Bus that only  
19 travels between Carnegie and the  
20 airport, which have very long travel  
21 and wait times.

22 I hope --- hope the  
23 government can get us to \$117 million  
24 we need to save --- to save PRT, or  
25 else I --- I will have to take the very

1 unexpected way. Cutting my work days,  
2 reducing my Pirate games, and --- and  
3 going to the days at Kennywood. I hope  
4 this --- I hope we get the proper  
5 funding we need. Thank you.

6 MS. SANTOS:

7 Thank you for speaking.

8 Next speaker, Amy Zaiss.

9 Anyone who is --- else who is  
10 registered to speak that would like to  
11 speak now? Okay.

12 Our next speaker is at  
13 12:55. Just to go over the schedule,  
14 our next speaker is at 12:55. And then  
15 at 1:00 p.m., we will break from 1:00  
16 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., and we'll begin  
17 speakers again at 3:00 p.m.

18 Hello. Okay. Please  
19 state your name. You'll have three  
20 minutes to speak, and we'll let you  
21 know when we --- you have one minute  
22 remaining.

23 MR. PASTOR:

24 Shawn Pastor, Castle  
25 Shannon, Mount Lebanon.

1 I'm actually here to help  
2 fight this funding crisis. This is,  
3 this ain't good. I don't know what ---  
4 I don't know what's going on. Like I  
5 said, I'm really. You guys are trying  
6 to cut the 38, the 36, 38, 41. I don't  
7 feel --- I don't think that's ---  
8 that's a good thing to do. That's a  
9 good --- that's a smart thing to do.

10 Because I utilize that  
11 service literally every day. There's  
12 people that I know that use that  
13 service, that use the 36 lot. And if  
14 you do this, it is --- that is going to  
15 devastate the whole entire community of  
16 Mount Lebanon. It's not in good  
17 standing. It's not good. We got to  
18 get this money. We got to get this  
19 money right now. Because if not, we're  
20 going to be screwed.

21 There's a lot of ---  
22 there's a lot of people that utilize  
23 that service. Not only me, but there  
24 are people that utilize that service.  
25 That you are going to --- that you are



1 going to devastate.

2 And the, like I said the  
3 fares, that's another issue. The  
4 passes, \$106? No, I can't afford that.  
5 The passes need to be at least \$100, at  
6 least a \$3 increase. Not a freaking  
7 almost \$10 increase. That's --- that  
8 right there tells me that it's at the  
9 brink of this. The brink of  
10 elimination, everything. I don't want  
11 that.

12 That \$10 --- that almost  
13 \$10 increase? I don't want that. I  
14 want the passes to at least be a \$4  
15 increase. Not --- not almost a \$10  
16 increase. Because that's --- that's  
17 really dipping into my budget. It's  
18 not --- I won't be able to ride. I  
19 won't be able to go anywhere because I  
20 won't be able to afford it.

21 It's not, like I said,  
22 you can't --- you can't expect people  
23 almost a \$10 --- almost \$10 increase on  
24 these passes on the monthlies when I  
25 can't even afford the \$97.50 to begin

1 with because everything's so high. I  
2 don't know why that was proposed, but  
3 like I said, it shouldn't have been.  
4 And the cuts? That's another issue.  
5 You can't do that to people. You can't  
6 screw them over. You can't screw  
7 everybody over in Mount Lebanon because  
8 people are going to fight back and say,  
9 no, enough's enough. Thank you.

10 MS. SANTOS:

11 Thank you for speaking.

12 Okay. Okay.

13 The next speaker, again,  
14 Amy? No? Okay. All right. That is  
15 our last speaker scheduled from 12:00  
16 to 1:00 p.m. until we resume again at  
17 3:00 p.m.

18 \* \* \* \* \*

19 MEETING CONCLUDED AT 12:55 P.M.

20 \* \* \* \* \*

## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.  
Dated the 13th day of May, 2025

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chelsea Curry", is written over a horizontal line.

Chelsea Curry,

Court Reporter

# Public Hearing 1

**Date: 4/29/2025**

**Location: Convention Center**

**Room: Main**

**Time: Afternoon**

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

PUBLIC MEETING

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED  
SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND FARE INCREASE

PUBLIC HEARING

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: KATHARINE KELLEMAN, CEO  
Tom Burgunder, Member  
Senator Lindsey Williams,  
Member  
Charles Reece, Member  
Donminika Brown, Member  
Don Rivetti, Member  
Jim Ritchie, Member  
Inez Colon, Member  
Amy Silbermann, Member  
Mike Cetra, Member

Reporter: Chelsea Curry

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1 HEARING: Tuesday, April 29, 2025

2 3:09 p.m.

3 LOCATION: David L. Lawrence

4 Convention Center

5 1000 Fort Duquesne

6 Boulevard

7 Pittsburgh, PA 15222

8 WITNESSES: Kimberly Bennett, Laura

9 Tompkins, James Love, Alisa Grishman,

10 Daeonna Walls, Jaylyn Blair, Ashley

11 Blye-Teimbers, Zachary Andrews, Karen

12 Smith, Kristen Greene, Judith

13 Vanderbeck, Andrew Husein, Jared

14 Helfer, Janet Evans, Adam Forgie, Echo

15 Frnka, David Williamson, Ocean

16 Capewell, Ryan Matthews, Alex

17 Campbell, Janet Evans, Jackson

18 Burgess, Bethanie Paul, Tracy Cole,

19 Tayvon Kevin Smith, Constance Berger,

20 Dawn Bartlett, Christopher Beam, Bill

21 Scott, Michael McCoy, John Cameron

22 Stockman, Anne Kramer, Joe Galluzzo

23

24

25

A P P E A R A N C E S

NONE

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

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MS. KELLEMAN:

It is now 3:09 and this public hearing will resume. As a reminder, this hearing is being recorded and transcribed by a court reporter. So if you do not want to be recorded, please exit the hearing room now.

Each speaker has up to three minutes to provide public comment and should come up to the speaker's table when called upon, table or podium, and state their name clearly and spell it for the court reporter before beginning to provide your public comment.

Just a reminder, this is a public hearing, so when you speak, the intent here is for you to speak onto the record for three minutes. There won't be dialogue coming back from us here up at the dais. We can come down and talk to you separately,

1 but when you're up here, your official  
2 comments are just dialogue up to us.  
3 So it's not that we're ignoring you,  
4 we're collecting comment right now.

5 And I will turn it back  
6 over to our moderators. So Lexi and  
7 Odessa. Or Odessa or Melissa.

8 MODERATOR:

9 Kimberly Bennett?

10 MS. BENNETT:

11 Hello. Kimberly  
12 Bennett. That's K-I-M-B-E-R-L-Y,  
13 B-E-N-N-E-T-T.

14 Hi, so I'm Kimberly  
15 Bennett. I'm a PRT rider. I live in  
16 Mount Washington, which by the way is  
17 one of the neighborhoods that is going  
18 to be losing its public transportation  
19 if the proposed cuts happen.

20 I am upset about the  
21 plan for a number of reasons that I  
22 think all of the residents living in  
23 the city should be upset about. I  
24 mean, for one, this would be, you  
25 know, a huge cut to the gains that

1 we've made on climate change. Our  
2 infrastructure certainly cannot  
3 support any more cars on the road.  
4 Traffic obviously will increase and it  
5 will decimate the city, these cuts.

6 If you think  
7 homelessness is bad now, just wait  
8 until people can't get to their jobs.  
9 Kids aren't going to be able to get to  
10 school. People aren't going to be  
11 able to get to local businesses to  
12 spend money. If you think that  
13 downtown Pittsburgh looks bad now,  
14 wait until people can't get to  
15 downtown Pittsburgh.

16 The other thing is, I'm  
17 livid about what appears to be a lack  
18 of forethought. I looked at your  
19 prior fiscal year revenue reports and  
20 in the past two revenue reports I see  
21 a reference to the fiscal cliff that  
22 PRT is facing, but I didn't see that  
23 phrase used in the prior reports.

24 In the fiscal year 2020  
25 report, it mentions that PRT is

1     cognizant of Act 89 sunseting, but  
2     that seems a little late to be  
3     worrying about an act that would be  
4     sunseting in three years.

5                     It seems like in the  
6     past few years, other than, you know,  
7     the two reports that I mentioned that  
8     mentioned the fiscal cliff, that PRT  
9     was Happy to be receiving COVID money  
10    and kind of had lost sight of the  
11    budgetary crisis that was upcoming.

12                    It doesn't look like  
13    anything's really been done to change  
14    the revenue stream. In the past  
15    fiscal year report, 81 percent of your  
16    funding comes from state funding. So  
17    it seems like this was a foreseeable  
18    problem and I don't see any efforts to  
19    fix the problem.

20                    So even if a miracle  
21    happens, what then? Are we going to  
22    wait for another ten year act to  
23    expire and then face this all over  
24    again? Because you're not going to be  
25    able to rehire those bus drivers that



1     you're going to have to lay off.  
2     You're going to face the same crisis  
3     that airlines had found themselves  
4     after COVID.

5                     So this is all to say  
6     I'm deeply disappointed. I hope that  
7     these cuts don't happen. Thank you  
8     for your time.

9                     MODERATOR:

10                    Thank you.

11                    Laura Tompkins?

12                    MR. TOMPKINS:

13                    Thanks y'all. My name  
14     is Laura Tompkins, L-A-U-R-A,  
15     T-O-M-P-K-I-N-S. I was hoping y'all  
16     would introduce yourselves. I guess  
17     that's not happening. So I kind of  
18     don't know what I'm trying to do, but  
19     if anyone - - - .

20                    MS. KELLEMAN:

21                    Ms. Tompkins, Ms.  
22     Tompkins, hold on. Start with Karen.

23                    Okay.

24                    MR. RITCHIE:

25                    I'm Jim Ritchie. I'm

1 the Chief Communications Officer for  
2 PRT.

3 MS. BROWN:

4 Hi, I'm Donminika Brown,  
5 I'm the Chief Financial Officer here  
6 at PRT.

7 MS. KELLEMAN:

8 And you should know who  
9 you're talking to. I'm Katharine  
10 Kelleman. I'm the CEO. Thank you.

11 MR. CETRA:

12 I'm Mike Cetra, Chief  
13 Legal Officer for PRT.

14 SENATOR WILLIAMS:

15 Senator Lindsey  
16 Williams, Board Member.

17 MS. SILBERMANN:

18 Any Silbermann, Chief  
19 Development Officer.

20 MS. COLON:

21 Inez Colon, Chief Human  
22 Resources Officer.

23 MR. RIVETTI:

24 I'm Don Rivetti, Chief  
25 Maintenance Officer.

1                   MS. TOMPKINS:

2                   Okay.

3                   MS. KELLEMAN:

4                   So let's start your  
5 clock over again. And Missy, let me  
6 know when she's good to go.

7                   MODERATOR:

8                   We're ready.

9                   MS. KELLEMAN:

10                  All right.

11                  Thank you, Ms. Tompkins.

12                  MS. TOMPKINS:

13                  Thanks.

14                  I live at 422 Winton  
15 Street. If anybody knows me in the  
16 audience --- they probably don't, but  
17 I'm a longtime union member. Casino  
18 workers, what's up? These are my  
19 roots. I started as a union slot  
20 tenant in Columbus, Ohio, but I now  
21 staff at a downtown labor union here  
22 in Pittsburgh.

23                  In other folks' eyes,  
24 they might see me as a little bit of a  
25 yuppie. I came --- I have a good

1 income and I moved here for work  
2 opportunities. So in that sense, I'm  
3 the kind of person Pittsburgh has  
4 tried hard to attract to our city. My  
5 husband also followed me here. He  
6 continues to work by car in  
7 Washington, PA, but we spend a lot of  
8 our money in the city.

9 My concerns are as  
10 follows. So number one, we live in a  
11 Mount Washington zip code but are  
12 closest to and spend most of our time  
13 in Allentown. We have a one car  
14 household because our neighborhood  
15 wasn't built for so many cars and  
16 cannot fit a second. The narrow roads  
17 and alleys are absolutely clogged with  
18 cars and people frequently experience  
19 sideswipes and lost mirrors from their  
20 on street parking spots. Public  
21 transit is vital to alleviate this.

22 We can't afford a second  
23 car anyway, let alone fit one on our  
24 street. As a result, we split car  
25 access between us. I frequently ride

1 the 43 and the 44 in a pinch to and  
2 from work, to my downtown dentist and  
3 other downtown activities. I enjoy  
4 these rides very much. The staff is  
5 professional and friendly and I like  
6 being surrounded by neighbors.

7 I literally met my best  
8 friend in Pittsburgh as a new  
9 Pittsburgh resident at the bus stop in  
10 a snowstorm. She helped me get to the  
11 44 when down the 43 couldn't make it  
12 down the hill and was delayed. We  
13 live two blocks from each other and  
14 she's become an important part of me  
15 family at home in my new city.

16 My neighborhood is  
17 income diverse and I like that about  
18 it. While I have 50 percent access to  
19 a car, many of my neighbors have  
20 little or no access. One of my  
21 neighbors uses disabled transport for  
22 his child. I care about these folks  
23 and how this will impact their lives.  
24 I don't want people to lose jobs or  
25 move out because they lose public

1 transport access and I don't know how  
2 I would get to and from work half the  
3 days myself.

4 I don't want the  
5 composition of my neighborhood to  
6 change. I want to integrate myself  
7 into it. This isn't just bad for me,  
8 it's bad for my neighbors and bad for  
9 the fabric of our communities.

10 I just want to say shame  
11 on whoever stingy state politicians  
12 are responsible for these cuts.  
13 That's how I feel. I'm here because  
14 I'm mad but I'm looking for solutions  
15 and I'm ready to do whatever is  
16 needed.

17 So thank you for taking my  
18 testimony.

19 MODERATOR:

20 Thank you.

21 James Love?

22 MR. LOVE:

23 Good afternoon, my name  
24 is James Love. I am once again here  
25 in Allegheny County. I am shocked at

1     our legislative Republicans on their  
2     negligence completely on how they  
3     mainly are attacking Class 1 SEPTA  
4     Philadelphia and Class 2 Port  
5     Authority Allegheny County.

6                     I am shocked on how - - -  
7     I'm sorry, I am shocked on how the  
8     class three, four and five systems out  
9     there are not coming out with their  
10    financial information. With  
11    Westmoreland Transit, Mignon Valley,  
12    Washington Freedom Transit, Newcastle  
13    and the other systems that are coming  
14    into downtown Pittsburgh.

15                    Since the pre birthing  
16    at the Port Authority Allegheny  
17    County, and I will always call it the  
18    Port Authority Allegheny County. I  
19    refuse to call it Pittsburgh Regional  
20    Transit because whoever put PRT is  
21    pocketing their pocket just like Mr.  
22    Skendales (phonetic) did.

23                    Which is partly why we  
24    are in the position where we are in  
25    with the way this Republicans are

1     against funding Class 1 SEPTA and  
2     Class 2 Port Authority. So whoever is  
3     enjoying their money, I hope you're  
4     enjoying it in your paychecks.

5                     Ms. Kathleen, I respect  
6     you, but I have not heard once - - -  
7     although I don't have money to pay for  
8     cable right now as I'm back on  
9     disability. That's when my daughter  
10    was wrongly adopted out.

11                    I have not heard once  
12    you offering to take any of your pay  
13    back. Yes, it's in your contract to  
14    work for Port Authority to get regular  
15    increases in your pay. You work hard.  
16    You deserve it. But in a situation  
17    like we are in right now, it is time  
18    that you give up some of that money.

19                    As far as where I was in  
20    the past feeding you, clothing you,  
21    electronics out east in Ridge Forest  
22    area of Rabbit York, Rabbit Regional  
23    Capital District, I was able to help  
24    him get the argument with PennDOT get  
25    the Hanover Gettysburg connector



1 running, but he took almost 15 years  
2 and I don't know what it was that I  
3 said that he was able that running to  
4 connect with his Gettysburg work and  
5 his Hanover York work. And now since  
6 then he's taken over capital area  
7 transit in the capital where they're  
8 in Harrisburg.

9 It is time that our  
10 Republicans understand that they may  
11 not want to support funding for SEPTA  
12 and Port Authority, but there are  
13 other areas that Rich could take off  
14 of his 28 exit crosses the Appalachian  
15 Trail in Duncannon to take over  
16 Huntington, Bedford, Fulton County to  
17 come over to connect with his money  
18 that he took over paratransit for  
19 Rabbit Indigo Indiana County. And he  
20 needs to take over the outline of  
21 transit systems from Erie all the way  
22 down to Newcastle all the way across  
23 22, 322, 422, U.S. 30 and in between.

24 It is time that Rabbit  
25 expands and have Rich that knows what

1 he's doing that replaced Steve Bland  
2 as CEO of Rabbit when Steve Bland was  
3 right over here to destroy our system  
4 at PRT.

5 MS. KELLEMAN:

6 Thank you, Mr. Love,  
7 it's time. Thank you.

8 MODERATOR:

9 Thank you.  
10 Alisa?

11 MS. GRISHMAN:

12 Okay, is this close  
13 enough? Can you hear me?

14 MS. KELLEMAN:

15 Yes.

16 MS. GRISHMAN:

17 Hi, I'm Alisa Grishman,  
18 A-L-I-S-A, G-R-I-S-H-M-A-N. I live in  
19 Uptown and I am one of 25 percent of  
20 Americans who lives with a disability  
21 and 30 percent who do not drive.

22 Many other people have  
23 come up today to give statistics and  
24 facts and figures. I am here to talk  
25 about me.

1                   I went to a concert last  
2 week. It ended at 11:30. There's an  
3 antiquated notion that when you become  
4 disabled, your life ends, that you sit  
5 at home all day, every day, only  
6 leaving your house to go to medical  
7 appointments.

8                   Nothing could be further  
9 from the truth. I have a vibrant,  
10 beautiful life. I go to concerts. I  
11 sit in coffee shops with friends. I  
12 go to museums and libraries and movies  
13 and stores. The thought of being  
14 stuck at home, unable to go out and  
15 socialize feels like death. Feels  
16 worse than death because at least if  
17 you're dead, you can't be bored.

18                  If the state does not  
19 come through to support transit  
20 agencies like PRT, and if there have  
21 to be drastic cuts to transit like  
22 what has been proposed, I won't be  
23 able to go to concert because they end  
24 after 11:00. I won't be able to meet  
25 my friends for coffee because the

1 buses will no longer run to their  
2 neighborhoods. Traveling outside of  
3 my house to shop, to go to medical  
4 appointments, to see a glimmer of life  
5 outside of my four walls would be made  
6 extremely difficult, if not  
7 impossible, because of the severe cuts  
8 to transit routes.

9 It's not just about my  
10 ability to get out that will be  
11 affected by these cuts, too. The only  
12 way I am able to live independently in  
13 my house that I own is through  
14 receiving in home services several  
15 times a week from aides who help me  
16 cook, clean, pick up groceries and do  
17 laundry.

18 Some of these aides rely  
19 on public transit, and if their routes  
20 are cut, I will lose a significant  
21 portion of my access to services and  
22 risk having to be put into a nursing  
23 home. Not to mention that they'll be  
24 out of the job.

25 I know that in the end,

1 all of your decisions will come down  
2 to those statistics and facts and  
3 figures. But I want both PRT and the  
4 state to remember that this isn't  
5 about numbers. This is about people  
6 who go to concerts, who hang out with  
7 friends, who live independently and  
8 who go to work using transit.

9 This is about me, Alisa  
10 Grishman, a living, breathing transit  
11 user with a vibrant, beautiful life.  
12 Thank you.

13 MODERATOR:

14 Thank you.

15 We now have time slots  
16 for City Charter School.

17 MS. KELLEMAN:

18 And whoever's coming up,  
19 remember, you're going to give us your  
20 name and spell it, and you have three  
21 minutes to talk.

22 MS. WALLS:

23 Hi.

24 MS. KELLEMAN:

25 Hello.

1                   MS. WALLS:

2                   My name is Daeonna  
3                   Walls, D-A-E-O-N-N-A. And as you  
4                   know, I attend the City Charter High  
5                   School.

6                   MS. KELLEMAN:

7                   You're doing great.  
8                   Deep breath, you got this. It's good.  
9                   It's good. We're friends.

10                  MS. WALLS:

11                  Okay.

12                  MS. KELLEMAN:

13                  Well, we're friendly.  
14                  leave. You might not be our friend,  
15                  but that's okay.

16                  MS. WALLS:

17                  Okay, okay.

18                  To deny people their  
19                  human rights is to challenge their  
20                  very humanity. Words by Nelson  
21                  Mandela. I go to City High and I  
22                  don't think, I know that continuing to  
23                  fund these buses is crucial to PA  
24                  citizens and whoever else is being  
25                  affected by this cut.

1                   Transportation is a  
2           necessity and essential factor to  
3           people's livelihood and is a  
4           fundamental right we are all obligated  
5           to. Cutting these bus routes is going  
6           to affect those with disabilities,  
7           those struggling to make ends meet  
8           financially and just everyone as a  
9           whole in general, no matter your  
10          identity.

11                   Removing these bus fares  
12          equals crushing our economy and  
13          considering the new unjust laws that  
14          we have to become accustomed to, the  
15          least we as citizens can have access  
16          to is getting to and from work and/or  
17          school.

18                   Do not cut  
19          transportation for PA citizens because  
20          it is going to create a disaster such  
21          as more people losing jobs and buses  
22          that no longer run are prone to  
23          creating more drunk drivers and those  
24          that just don't need nor know how to  
25          drive resulting into mine, yours and

1 your children's lives at stake.

2 Eliminating these bus  
3 fares, you are putting us all in  
4 jeopardy. Whether this is a fund  
5 issue, it can and should be resolved.  
6 Even if you think you're not affected,  
7 mine and your transportation equal  
8 fair human right. Thank you.

9 MS. KELLEMAN:

10 Thank you.

11 Do we have anyone else  
12 from City High?

13 MR. BLAIR:

14 My name is Jaylyn Blair  
15 from City Center High School.

16 Cutting --- for public  
17 transit in Pittsburgh would have  
18 significant and far reaching  
19 consequences for various groups of  
20 people including students, disabled  
21 individuals and the general public.

22 For students, public  
23 transit is essential for accessing  
24 education, interns and campus jobs.  
25 According to the Pittsburgh Regional



1 Transit, approximately 14 percent of  
2 Pittsburgh residents rely on public  
3 transportation to get to work with a  
4 similar precedence of college students  
5 depending on public transit for  
6 commuting.

7 A reduction in the  
8 service or an increasing in fares  
9 would raise transportation costs,  
10 making it harder and difficult for  
11 students to afford to commute to  
12 school, especially considering that  
13 Pittsburgh's average cost of public  
14 transit is already higher than the  
15 national average at \$2.75 per ride.

16 These changes could lead  
17 to a longer wait time and less  
18 reliable service and a more difficult  
19 commute, ultimately impacting academic  
20 performance and extracurricular  
21 engagement and social participation.

22 For disabled  
23 individuals, a public transit is not  
24 just a convenience but a critical part  
25 of daily life. Over 20 percent of

1 Pittsburgh's population is disabled  
2 and many of them rely on public  
3 transit or paratransit services to  
4 access medical care, groceries and  
5 employment. According to the National  
6 Organization of Disability, 33 percent  
7 of people with disabilities in  
8 Pittsburgh report that transportation  
9 is - - - to participating in daily life.

10 Budget cuts can lead to  
11 reductions in paratransit services,  
12 longer wait times or less frequent  
13 routes, severely impacting the  
14 independence of and mobility of  
15 disabled residents. For example, the  
16 paratransit services were reduced just  
17 by ten percent, this could leave  
18 thousands of disabled residents  
19 stranded, unable to attend medical  
20 appointments or work, significantly  
21 impacting their quality of life.

22 The loss of accessible  
23 public transit options could lead to a  
24 decreasing employment opportunities  
25 for individuals with disabilities who

1 face a bare to finding accessible  
2 transit for work.

3 Beyond students and  
4 disabled individuals, the general  
5 public in Pittsburgh could also bear  
6 the burn of reduced public transit  
7 funding. According to the Allegheny  
8 Conference on community development,  
9 nearly 20 percent of Pittsburgh  
10 residents rely on public transit to  
11 get to work, with many of them working  
12 in low wage jobs where the ability to  
13 afford a car is not feasible.

14 With fewer buses and  
15 longer wait times, it will become more  
16 difficult for these residents to get  
17 to work for access and essential  
18 services. In fact, studies show that  
19 60 percent of workers in Pittsburgh  
20 who use public transit earn less than  
21 \$30,000 a year and for many of them  
22 public transit is their only option  
23 for commuting.

24 Additionally, a  
25 reduction in transit service will

1     likely push to rely on cars,  
2     exacerbating Pittsburgh already  
3     problematic traffic congestion.  
4     Pittsburgh ranks 35th in the world ---  
5     in the country for the worst traffic  
6     congestion with an average commuter  
7     spending 37 hours per year stuck in  
8     traffic.

9                     If more people would  
10    turn to cars due to limited transit  
11    options, this will increase congesting  
12    leading to longer --- times, more air  
13    pollution. Pittsburgh already  
14    struggles with high levels of air  
15    pollution and increased car use will  
16    worsen the issue impacting public  
17    health and the environment.

18                    The economic effects of  
19    cutting transit buses will also ---.

20                    MS. KELLEMAN:

21                    You can finish your  
22    sentence.

23                    MR. BLAIR:

24                    Oh. Businesses located  
25    near transit routes depending on foot

1 traffic and accessibility that public  
2 transit provides.

3 MS. KELLEMAN:

4 Thank you.

5 MODERATOR:

6 Ashley Blye-Teimbers.

7 MS. TEIMBERS:

8 Hi, my name is Ashley  
9 Blye-Teimbers. Ashley spelled the  
10 regular way, A-S-H-L-E-Y, Blye,  
11 B-L-Y-E, hyphen Teimbers,  
12 T-E-I-M-B-E-R-S.

13 My name is Ashley Blye-  
14 Teimbers and I ride public transit  
15 almost every day. When I was  
16 diagnosed with epilepsy at 16, the  
17 system has gotten me to work, the  
18 college, to church, my whole life  
19 since then. It's brought me home late  
20 hours at night when I couldn't afford  
21 an Uber, it's taken me to the hospital  
22 when I needed care into my grandma's  
23 side when she was sick. Public  
24 transit isn't just a ride, it's how I  
25 live my life.

1                   So when you talk about  
2     cutting our buses services by up to 35  
3     percent and slashing our access  
4     service by over 60 percent, what's  
5     really being cut is our freedom, our  
6     dignity, our ability to survive.  
7     Because let's be honest, if these cuts  
8     happen, it won't be the wealthy people  
9     who expect to feel it. It'll be the  
10    students, the workers, the seniors,  
11    people with disabilities like myself.  
12    It'll be the low income communities  
13    like mine left stranded.

14                  Transit is not a luxury.  
15    It is a lifeline. And I'm here to say  
16    we will not let anyone cut our  
17    lifeline without a fight. We need the  
18    legislature to step up and fund our  
19    future because we do deserve better.  
20    Pittsburgh deserves better. To move  
21    freely, safely and with dignity. Save  
22    our services, save our communities,  
23    save our jobs and fund public transit.  
24    It's not a want, it's a need. I'm  
25    done.

1                   MODERATOR:

2                   Thank you.

3                   Zachary Andrews?

4                   MR. ANDREWS:

5                   I'm Zach and I - - - okay,  
6                   you want me to read this on the phone  
7                   or just say something original?

8                   MS. KELLEMAN:

9                   Your choice.

10                  MR. ANDREWS:

11                  Okay, fine. I'm a CCAC  
12                  student. Mom works in the city 'cause  
13                  we live in Ambridge. If she ain't  
14                  taking the 14, she's taking Lyft. If  
15                  I ain't taking BCTA, I'm taking the  
16                  14. Honestly, I'm just going to read  
17                  some of this. Who cares?

18                  Yeah, I go back and  
19                  forth between BCTA route one and 14  
20                  for economic reasons because - - -  
21                  reason. And when I heard that y'all  
22                  are planning on cutting the 14, it's  
23                  like oh, you're isolating the people.

24                  Here's a better idea.  
25                  Either keep the 14, bring the 21 or

1 the proposed D23 up to Ambridge or  
2 reduce all the restrictions y'all have  
3 on BCTA. Yeesh.

4 And then there's a bunch  
5 of routes I probably don't --- and  
6 then there's neighborhoods I don't go  
7 to but it would affect everyone  
8 anyway. Instead of cutting the silver  
9 line, just cut the blue line. That  
10 goes to different --- that goes ---  
11 because the blue line goes to the same  
12 neighborhoods at both area --- both  
13 routes go to anyway. You're  
14 connecting people and saving money at  
15 the same time. Yeesh. Jagoffs.  
16 Sorry for the language. Circular  
17 language. At least it's more tamed.

18 Honestly, and the Moon  
19 Flyer, why you want to cut that?  
20 There's college students. You're  
21 cutting access to college students. I  
22 like that proposed plan that ya'll had  
23 with connecting the Moon Flyer with  
24 Robinson Mall on the way to and from  
25 the city, but cutting that thing all



1 together, you're making it hard for  
2 college students to get to their jobs.

3 Honestly. I'm just  
4 going to end it here. Cutting BCTA  
5 access --- no, cutting --- no wait,  
6 cutting Pittsburgh Transit access to  
7 Ambridge while keeping BCTA under the  
8 same restrictions, it's like Hopewell  
9 --- it's like Hopewell refusing to let  
10 Quip merge with them. Think about  
11 that one. I'm done here.

12 MODERATOR:

13 Thank you.

14 Karen Smith.

15 MS. SMITH:

16 My name is Karen Smith,  
17 K-A-R-E-N, S-M-I-T-H, and no I'm not  
18 that type of Karen. I'm another type  
19 of Karen. The advocate type. I'm  
20 from Carnegie PA and I take several  
21 buses, one of which would actually be  
22 cut to the Hospital, St. Clair, which  
23 I would be traveling from one third  
24 all the way to St. Clair Hospital  
25 without the bus.

1                   Well, anyway. Okay,  
2 first off, who are you? I am an  
3 advocate. I am a bus rider as well as  
4 many people here in this room and  
5 those who are not in this room, future  
6 as well as past and present.

7                   Why are you here? To  
8 advocate for reliable dedicated  
9 funding. Transportation funding.  
10 What's at stake? The lives of many  
11 who depend on public transportation  
12 now and well into the future.

13                   What is the ask? Please  
14 say you - - - please say yes to reliable  
15 dedicated transit funding so that we  
16 all can stay connected to and with  
17 each other and the many other services  
18 that the buses provide us access to.

19                   Don't let our lifeline  
20 go flat line. Because if we do, we  
21 will not be able to get to the  
22 hospitals. They will not be able to  
23 get to us. The many people that have  
24 home care services will not be able to  
25 have their caregivers who take buses

1     come to them. And they will not be  
2     able to go out to their appointment,  
3     get groceries or get where they need  
4     to be and they will not be able - - -  
5     and you will have a ghost city. Not a  
6     ghost town, a ghost City. Ghost City  
7     is not as - - - you think ghost city is  
8     not as bad as ghost town. Well yeah,  
9     it's worse. It's bigger. It's a  
10    bigger issue.

11                   But you know, instead of  
12    creating a problem, how about fixing  
13    the one that's now? Instead of  
14    putting more on the plate, finish what  
15    you got on here now that way we can  
16    nip it in the bud, cut it where it  
17    needs to be. But apparently you're  
18    cutting it where it's not needed to  
19    be.

20                   We need the dedicated  
21    funding. It needs to be reliable, it  
22    needs to be dependable and it needs to  
23    be permanent and forever.

24                   As well as the funding,  
25    we also need buses that will run

1 properly along with - - - everybody that  
2 needs the bus, they need a bus that  
3 does not have issues. The blood's  
4 running out. We need to - - - we need  
5 dedicated funding. Dedicated funding  
6 is going to be a bloodline. Don't let  
7 our buses go flat lined. Think  
8 transportation. Think us. The world  
9 needs it. We all need it.

10 MS. KELLEMAN:

11 Thank you.

12 Kristen Greene?

13 You got this Kristen.

14 MS. GREENE:

15 Hi, my name is Kristen  
16 Greene, K-R-I-S-T-E-N, G-R-E-E-N-E. I  
17 have been a transit user since I was  
18 14 years old.

19 Over the years, transit  
20 services has declined for regular  
21 users. Recently the Port Authority of  
22 Pittsburgh proposed closing 40  
23 additional routes due to lack of  
24 funds. This concerns me deeply as I  
25 depend on the buses to take me where I

1       need to go.

2                       Additionally, these  
3       closures will negatively affect  
4       communities. Many people depend on  
5       mass transit to get to work, school  
6       and doctor's appointments. How do you  
7       expect these residents to get where  
8       they need to go with no bus services?  
9       What about people who leave work late  
10      at night and our do not have a safe  
11      way home? What about people who work  
12      overnight? You can't be serious.  
13      Please take their safety into  
14      consideration.

15                      Port Authority workers  
16      would also be negatively affected by  
17      these budget cuts. There will be  
18      layoffs. What will you do about that?

19                      Something needs to be  
20      done to prevent these closures. The  
21      Port Authority needs to work with  
22      state and local organizations and  
23      government and as a team come up with  
24      a solution. Pittsburghers need mass  
25      transit. It is already difficult to

1 get around the city with the current  
2 services, let alone closing additional  
3 routes.

4 In addition to fare  
5 increases, these proposed routes  
6 changes will negatively affect the  
7 residents of our city. I'm asking the  
8 leaders of the Port Authority to re  
9 think these proposed changes. We need  
10 to keep the buses running.  
11 Pittsburghers depend on this, on  
12 public transportation. Listen to your  
13 employees, especially the bus  
14 operators as they have a stake as well  
15 in these changes. Thank you.

16 MODERATOR:

17 Thank you.

18 Judith Vanderbeck.

19 MS. VANDERBECK:

20 My name is Judith  
21 Vanderbeck, J-U-D-I-T-H,  
22 V-A-N-D-E-R-B-E-C-K. I live in the  
23 city of Pittsburgh Shadyside area.  
24 I'm a non driver. I'm visually  
25 impaired and I'm also self employed.

1       So taking Uber is not an option.

2                       What I would like to  
3       talk about is the proposed cuts to  
4       regularity of bus service, cutting the  
5       frequency and limiting buses after  
6       11:00 p.m. These are the biggest  
7       issues that affect me.

8                       I am able to walk to my  
9       job fortunately, but the biggest risk  
10      to me is having customers not being  
11      able to get to me. I have customers  
12      who come to me from all over the city  
13      and although living right in the  
14      middle of the city, the buses I depend  
15      on may not be the ones that are  
16      completely cut, but the fact that they  
17      would be limited with much more time  
18      between buses running, may deter  
19      customers get into me.

20                      I spent 30 years  
21      building my business. Since I'm  
22      visually impaired, traditional jobs  
23      have not --- I have not been able to  
24      find job security with traditional  
25      jobs. So I'm very proud of the fact

1       that I have built a very successful  
2       business for 30 years and I do not  
3       want to experience catastrophic effect  
4       on my business due to customers not  
5       getting to me because they've depended  
6       on bus service that is no longer  
7       accessible on a regular basis.

8                       In addition, I depend on  
9       Port Authority to take me to all the  
10      social activities I do. And I do get  
11      around. I take the P1, the P3, the  
12      P78, the 75, the 64, the 86, the 71B,  
13      the 71D, the 71C, the 1, 6, 15, and  
14      the T to North Shore and South Hills.  
15      Cutting service and especially service  
16      after 11:00 p.m. will take a  
17      catastrophic hit to my social activity  
18      and all of the things that I support  
19      in the city.

20                      What I ask is that  
21      funding be provided to Pennsylvania to  
22      support our public service system.  
23      Thank you.

24                      MODERATOR:

25                      Thank you.   Ken Moseel



1 (phonetic)? Ken Moseel? Okay, if Ken  
2 arrives, we'll fit them in when  
3 there's an opening.

4 Loretta Gillespie  
5 (phonetic). Okay, we'll come back to  
6 Loretta.

7 Adam Forgie? Do we have  
8 Adam Forgie?

9 Stan Covert (phonetic).  
10 Stan Covert?

11 Rose Weiker (phonetic).  
12 Do we have Rose Weiker?

13 Andrew Husein?

14 MR. HUSEIN:

15 Good evening. I wasn't  
16 sure if I was actually going to speak,  
17 but hey, some of your peers pressured  
18 me into it. So here we are.

19 This is going to be a  
20 little bit off the cuff, but to start  
21 with, this is kind of going to be a  
22 little bit of a story and then go from  
23 there. But for some of the people up  
24 here who are newer faces to PRT, not  
25 necessarily here during the last

1 session before some of the Board  
2 members left may not know this, but I  
3 have a bit of a, shall we say,  
4 reputation for being one of PRT's  
5 definitely biggest riders, for sure.

6 One of the old Board  
7 members, John Tague and me used to  
8 always occasionally quip about me  
9 setting records on PRT because there's  
10 this person that kind of got me into  
11 tracking my ridership for various  
12 reasons. And so before he left for  
13 his tenure, my record was like 1,500  
14 rides in a month. And now it's gotten  
15 so ridiculous. Partly because of  
16 displacement to where I live now, I've  
17 been displaced three times in the last  
18 year. And now I'm in one of PRT's  
19 hardest to get to and from service  
20 areas.

21 So I'm no stranger to  
22 transfer. So now I've easily been  
23 clocking in over 5k rides a month. As  
24 crazy as that might be for some people  
25 to imagine, it is doable, especially

1 if you have passed will transfer.

2 But I'm --- so I'm  
3 definitely, I would say, more than  
4 qualified to say a little bit on some  
5 of the things that I see going on in  
6 the system as well as where I see the  
7 system headed. And it's not good  
8 where it's headed right now.

9 I see people online talk  
10 about, oh, nobody takes transit,  
11 nobody uses transit, blah, blah, blah,  
12 why should we fund transit? And then  
13 I see certain Government reciprocate  
14 that attitude, like, why should we  
15 fund transit? It's not important, it's  
16 not a priority.

17 But even though I'm an  
18 outlier with as many trips as I take  
19 on transit, clearly I can say with  
20 confidence that whoever's saying that  
21 people don't use and need transit is  
22 more than a little bit full of it.  
23 They're living in some kind of  
24 alternate reality, la-la land. So we  
25 need to get this transit funding dealt

1 with, and we need to get it done  
2 reasonably.

3 In the meantime, I know  
4 we had a BLR redesign project that now  
5 looks like it's, unfortunately, for  
6 better or for worse, on hold or may  
7 not happen at all because we're in  
8 this doomsday scenario now that we're  
9 hoping to avoid, obviously, or we  
10 wouldn't all be here.

11 And so I gave that BLR,  
12 along with another passport Authority  
13 legend, a little bit of a, shall we  
14 say, counter proposal to the BLR. And  
15 I'm now in the process of doing a  
16 counter proposal for the cuts that are  
17 coming.

18 And so my hope is that  
19 we can maybe, rather than cut 40 some  
20 routes and cut service at night and  
21 all this other crazy stuff, that  
22 hopefully we can find a solution that  
23 even if we don't get the funding, you  
24 know, to cut as few routes as possible  
25 and get more creative with where

1 routes go, where routes start, and  
2 maybe even things like combining  
3 routes. Thank you.

4 MODERATOR:

5 Thank you.

6 Jared Helfer (phonetic).

7 MR. HELFER:

8 How's it going? Yeah, I  
9 don't have much. I live in Mount  
10 Washington and I take the 40 all the  
11 time. Yeah, one of the cuts would  
12 eliminate the 40. I mean, that's like  
13 the hilliest - - - it's a crazy city of  
14 hills. And that's like - - - it's  
15 basically a mountain. I mean, apropos  
16 of the name.

17 Yeah, it would just  
18 suck, especially like that Grandview  
19 Avenue. I think about this a lot.  
20 Like, we love that Grandview Avenue.  
21 Every picture of Pittsburgh is taken  
22 from Grandview. It's like the scenic  
23 - - - the scenic overlook of the city.  
24 You know, seven eighths of people  
25 could not get up there and see the

1 city from that angle.

2 Charlie's okay. Breaks  
3 down a lot. There's the 43. Okay. I  
4 walk up the hill all the time. Like,  
5 I've been riding a bus for what, 15,  
6 20 years. I've probably traveled a  
7 million miles, something like that on  
8 the bus. Probably felt like it could  
9 have gone to Mercury possibly, you  
10 know.

11 Yeah. I don't know. I  
12 would appreciate, yeah, trying to do  
13 anything. Yeah. That's why you're  
14 here. Yeah, appreciate you holding  
15 these meetings. I think yeah, do a  
16 bunch more. Because I don't think  
17 people even realize that --- yeah,  
18 don't know what you got --- don't know  
19 what you got until it's gone. Who  
20 sang that? Carly Simon. No. Carol  
21 King. Joni Mitchell, yeah, thank you.  
22 Sampled by --- anyway.

23 Yeah, I know a lot of  
24 people especially like in Mount  
25 Washington are like, yeah, old,

1 infirmed, have wheelchairs. They just  
2 would be stranded out there. So many  
3 neighborhoods would just be --- I  
4 don't know, just deserted essentially.  
5 And maybe turning to like these  
6 strange like tech. Like, you know ---  
7 I don't know, you get like delivered  
8 on drones. That would be the only  
9 way.

10 And just who likes  
11 traffic? I mean, just like buses  
12 eliminate traffic. They're really  
13 funny and fun. I love riding the bus.  
14 I've seen like some of the most insane  
15 things and people on the bus.

16 Anyway. Yeah. That's  
17 not worth the, what is \$100 million  
18 you got a raise? \$100 million? Is  
19 that a lot? I have no idea. I mean,  
20 that's like a lot to me. No, yeah.

21 Appreciate you  
22 listening. I have faith to do it.  
23 Yeah. Thank you.

24 MODERATOR:

25 Thank you.

1 Do we have Ken Moseel?  
2 Loretta Gillespie?  
3 Adam Forgie?  
4 Stan Covert?  
5 Rose Weiker?  
6 Is Janet Evans here by  
7 chance?

8 MS. WALKER:

9 Hello. I'm a lifelong  
10 advocate, I guess for everybody.  
11 Myself, I'm here on behalf of my  
12 residence in Glen Hazel, Hazelwood.  
13 I always ride the 57.  
14 And I heard that they're moving it to  
15 another area. But I also have  
16 caregivers. I come from the North  
17 Side in Penn Hills. You name it,  
18 that's where they come from. I depend  
19 on them for 24 hour care. They get me  
20 up in the morning, dress. --- with me  
21 ready for today.

22 I've been --- I ride ---  
23 most of my life. Rain, spring,  
24 summer, fall. I do ride the bus.  
25 Especially to Waterfront or even



1       downtown.

2                       I also, the residents  
3       when they want to go shopping, they  
4       need 57 to run up and down Johnson  
5       Avenue and pick us up. There's a lot  
6       more of us who have power chairs and  
7       we all get out more now that the  
8       weather is changing.

9                       But really I would like  
10      to see more seating on the Port  
11      Authority buses because there's more  
12      of us that need to go to the  
13      Waterfront or downtown or to their  
14      appointments in Oakland. And that's  
15      very important.

16                      I just want to put that  
17      out. More seating for people in power  
18      chairs because a lot of us like to go  
19      to the Waterfront and then we have to  
20      wait for buses if there's more than  
21      two people on a bus.

22                      But really I don't like  
23      hearing that we might lose the 57 all  
24      together. That's not right because  
25      Johnson Avenue if they drop anybody

1 off on 2nd Avenue, a lot of people  
2 cannot walk that hill. I might be  
3 able to ride it, but hey, that's okay,  
4 but still, I'm speaking on behalf of  
5 all of us. We really don't want to  
6 lose our bus. And thank you for being  
7 here. I wouldn't miss that for the  
8 world.

9 MODERATOR:

10 Thank you, Janet.

11 Adam Forgie?

12 MR. FORGIE:

13 Good afternoon. My name  
14 is Adam Forgie. I am the Mayor of  
15 Turtle Creek Borough and a teacher  
16 with Woodland Hills School District.

17 I'm here today to  
18 express my deep concern of the  
19 proposed cuts to Pittsburgh Regional  
20 Transit, or PRT services.

21 These reductions will be  
22 devastating for the Mon and Turtle  
23 Creek valleys, particularly for  
24 residents who rely on public  
25 transportation as their sole means of

1     accessing work, health care,  
2     education, and basic necessities.

3                 Public transportation is  
4     not just about getting from point A to  
5     point B. It is a lifeline of  
6     existence. In communities like Turtle  
7     Creek, dozens of residents of all ages  
8     rely on PRT buses to survive.

9     Students use them to get to school.

10    Parents depend on them to take

11    children to medical appointments.

12    Workers across all professions use

13    them to reach their jobs. Without

14    these services, many residents risk

15    losing employment, education

16    opportunities, and access to critical

17    care.

18                 This is not only - - -

19    this not only threatens individual

20    livelihoods, but also the stability of

21    our local businesses and our overall

22    economy.

23                 Seniors use transit

24    services daily to shop for groceries,

25    pick up prescriptions and attend

1 doctor's appointments. If we  
2 eliminate those routes, we isolate  
3 them, cutting them off of independence  
4 and diminishing their quality of life.

5 For low income families  
6 without cars, these buses are the only  
7 affordable form of transportation.

8 Cutting services would deepen the  
9 economic divide faced by many in the  
10 Mon Valley and in the eastern  
11 Allegheny County suburbs. The  
12 disparities are clear. The eastern  
13 suburbs do not benefit from a subway  
14 line, HOV lanes, or widespread bike  
15 trail access. For many of our  
16 residents, busing is the only  
17 accessible and affordable reliable  
18 public transit option.

19 In 2024, Governor  
20 Shapiro successfully secured \$153  
21 million in funding to preserve SEPTA,  
22 or Philadelphia's public regional  
23 transit system in southeastern  
24 Pennsylvania. His leadership ensured  
25 that five counties maintain essential

1 transit routes and affordable fares.

2 PRT, as the second  
3 largest public transportation system  
4 in the Commonwealth, deserves the same  
5 level of commitment and federal  
6 support. The precedent has been set.  
7 Our residents deserve equal  
8 consideration.

9 The economic impact of  
10 public transit should not be  
11 underestimated. Research shows that  
12 every dollar spent on PRT generates up  
13 to seven to eight dollars in our local  
14 economies. Losing these services  
15 would be a blow not only to riders,  
16 but to the economic fabric of our  
17 region.

18 PRT is seeking \$117  
19 million increase in state funding to  
20 maintain its services. While we must  
21 rally state and local leaders to  
22 support this increase, I firmly  
23 believe the most promising solutions  
24 lie in securing federal funds.  
25 Whether those are grants, reallocation

1 of transportation project dollars as  
2 well as we get for SEPTA, our federal  
3 officials must act. We as their  
4 constituents must call on them to  
5 deliver the \$117 million needed to  
6 keep our buses in region running.

7 Failure to find these  
8 funds is not an option. These routes  
9 are a lifeline and we cannot afford to  
10 lose them. This cannot be the end of  
11 the line when so many are on board.  
12 It is those in power --- it is time  
13 for those in power to step up and  
14 deliver for the communities that need  
15 them the most. Abandoning these  
16 riders who need PRT services is  
17 literally a fare they can't afford.  
18 Thank you.

19 MS. KELLEMAN:

20 Is there anyone in the  
21 audience who would like to speak who's  
22 not registered? Yeah, you can just  
23 come up and tell us your name. Just  
24 make sure that you please register at  
25 the table after you speak.

1                   MS. FRNKA:

2                   Hi, my name is Echo  
3                   Franka, E-C-H-O, F-R-N-K-A. I am a  
4                   librarian. I work in a South Hills  
5                   area of Pittsburgh and I live in  
6                   Carrick.

7                   I take the 51 every day  
8                   to work and the 51 is always crowded  
9                   and I know that the 51 service is  
10                  going to be reduced if funding does  
11                  not come through and that's concerning  
12                  because I feel like the 51 is always  
13                  really crowded as it is and if it were  
14                  to be kept even more, I'm not sure  
15                  that --- how I would be able to get to  
16                  work.

17                  In addition, I work at a  
18                  very small community library. One of  
19                  my co workers lives in Carnegie and  
20                  would not be able to use the bus to go  
21                  to work at all if this funding cut  
22                  were to --- this funding increase were  
23                  not to go through. She would have to  
24                  take an expensive Uber every single  
25                  day.

1                   We do - - - at my  
2       workplace we do really important work  
3       for the community and I really fear  
4       what would happen if we were not able  
5       to provide those services as well.

6                   In addition to that, a  
7       lot of our regulars at the library are  
8       disabled and rely on access services  
9       that would be cut and they are relying  
10      on bus lines that would have been cut  
11      altogether or greatly to reduce  
12      service. And having access to just  
13      being able to live an independent life  
14      would be devastating for a lot of  
15      people I see regularly at work.

16                  They, you know, as some  
17      other people spoke about, they - - -  
18      people with disabilities are not - - -  
19      you know, shouldn't be trapped in  
20      their homes. They should be able to  
21      have vibrant and productive and, you  
22      know, they should be able to have a  
23      social life just like everyone else.  
24      That's all I have to say. Thank you.

25                   MODERATOR:



1 Thank you.

2 Do we have David

3 Williamson?

4 MR. WILLIAMSON:

5 I'm David Williamson,

6 D-A-V-I-D, W-I-L-L-I-A-M-S-O-N.

7 There's --- if you cut  
8 the buses after 11:00, there will be a  
9 lot more drunk drivers, a lot more  
10 people dying from drunk drivers  
11 getting --- running people over. If  
12 you want to save money, you know,  
13 think about the cost of ambulances for  
14 one thing.

15 There's a lot of people  
16 who don't have cars who shouldn't have  
17 cars. Honestly, nobody should have a  
18 car, but that's beside the point. ---  
19 , you know, if you need to have more  
20 money, why can't you just have  
21 congestion pricing for the cars in  
22 downtown? That would raise a lot more  
23 money that you could put to the buses  
24 on or something --- say other same  
25 things.

1                   And there's - - - if you  
2     cut buses after 11:00, there will be a  
3     lot more - - - businesses will lose out  
4     on people getting home from, you know,  
5     nightlife things, entertainments of  
6     any kind or people who work late at  
7     night are not going to be able to  
8     work. So those businesses close for  
9     that reason. You cut down getting to  
10    places, they won't be able to go to  
11    work or to spend the money either.  
12    Thank you.

13                   MODERATOR:

14                  Our next couple of  
15    speakers have not arrived. So if  
16    there's anyone in the room who would  
17    like to speak but is not registered,  
18    you can come up and do that and we can  
19    get you registered after.

20                   MS. CAPEWELL:

21                  Hi, my name is Ocean  
22    Capewell, O-C-E-A-N, C-A-P-E-W-E-L-L,  
23    and I wasn't planning on speaking, SO  
24    this may be a little off the cuff as  
25    well.

1                   But I just wanted to  
2 point out that, you know, buses are a  
3 safety net. We live in a society, in  
4 a city that is designed for cars,  
5 where the needs of drivers are kind of  
6 prioritized. But that's not everybody  
7 who lives here. You know, this region  
8 has always been home to people who are  
9 poor, who are working class who maybe  
10 don't have a car, who have things to  
11 do, who - - - and you know, it's just  
12 the more that buses get cut, the more  
13 the region suffers.

14                   Nearly every job asks if  
15 you have a reliable form of transport.  
16 They're not supposed to ask if you  
17 have a car if it doesn't impact - - -  
18 you know, if you don't have to drive,  
19 you know, if you don't have to drive  
20 for the position itself.

21                   But I mean with - - - you  
22 know, if the buses are cut, then  
23 transit will get less and less  
24 reliable. Poor people will get  
25 poorer. Like economic, you know,

1       instability will increase and I think  
2       it will just - - - you know, it's not  
3       going to be the developers that are  
4       going to be hurting. It's not going  
5       to be the people with the most money  
6       that are going to be hurting. It's  
7       going to be the most vulnerable  
8       people, the disabled, the houseless,  
9       the young and the very old who are  
10      going to be feeling this. And so I'm  
11      here to speak on their behalf as well  
12      as mine.

13                       I'm a lifelong non  
14      driver. I take the 64. I was very  
15      excited when I heard it might be going  
16      all the way to Millvale because  
17      currently the way to get to Millville  
18      from where I live in Bloomfield is to  
19      take it to 40th Street and then walk.  
20      That's literally what Google Maps  
21      tells you to do, which takes a really  
22      long time. I've done it more than  
23      once.

24                       So I was excited. If  
25      that's still on the table, that would

1 be wonderful. I think it would change  
2 a lot of lives for the better. But  
3 okay, that's all I have to say. Thank  
4 you.

5 MODERATOR:

6 You can come up.

7 MR. MATTHEWS:

8 Hello, my name is Ryan  
9 Matthews. That's R-Y-A-N,  
10 M-A-T-T-H-E-W-S. Also a bit  
11 unprepared today, but I took a little  
12 bit of notes. And I'll try to say  
13 something a little bit different than  
14 what I've been hearing too.

15 So I rode the T here  
16 today. I live at the end of the  
17 Silver Line, which is one of the lines  
18 that you're planning on cutting. So  
19 I've been set up for failure. I'm not  
20 here just to complain about the T.  
21 There's a point I'm going to make  
22 here. So for a minute this will sound  
23 bad but you know, I won't confuse  
24 things. Hear me out.

25 So I'm going to tell you

1     about my journey here today. I  
2     started early because I knew what was  
3     ahead of me. The one good thing today  
4     is that the T basically picks me up  
5     from my front door. So that part was  
6     good. Then the T stops at the end of  
7     the Silver Line where it convenes with  
8     the Red Line and Blue line at  
9     Washington Junction. And I had to get  
10    off the T because of the current  
11    construction and route changes that  
12    are happening.

13                   So I had to stop at  
14    Washington Junction. The connection  
15    to pick up the next train was nine  
16    minutes late. So that's plus nine  
17    minutes to my journey. Then instead  
18    of a Blue Line coming which is the  
19    fastest way to Pittsburgh, a Red Line  
20    came instead. So that's plus five  
21    more minutes for me.

22                   Then for the current  
23    tunnel construction project, the  
24    closure there, we have to go over the  
25    hill over Mount Washington through

1 Allentown instead. So that's at least  
2 five more minutes there through that  
3 one way bridge which is apparently why  
4 the Silver Line - - - .

5 So my journey here from  
6 the end of the Silver Line took about  
7 an hour and ten minutes or an hour and  
8 15 minutes. It probably should take  
9 about 40 or 50 minutes, based on my  
10 past experience. And then I walked  
11 here ten minutes.

12 So last month, a couple  
13 of Bethel Park Council members came to  
14 my neighborhood for a meeting and kind  
15 of talked to us about the upcoming  
16 changes to Port Authority. And one of  
17 the Council members said, we need to  
18 get more people riding the T again.  
19 And I thought that was pretty funny  
20 because why would more people start  
21 riding the T right now when it's this  
22 much worse with these extra changes?

23 So I pay my taxes. I'm  
24 here right now telling you guys what's  
25 up and how to spend the money. What's

1     going to sell things for everyone in  
2     here in this room right now is money.  
3     It's the only thing that's going to  
4     solve it.

5                     So please, let's get  
6     Pittsburgh funded. I think that's  
7     pretty obvious that that's the issue  
8     here. And everyone sitting in front  
9     of me here today, I don't think any of  
10    you wants to cut service. I think  
11    that you all are actually doing this  
12    right now because we're trying to get  
13    funded and fix this. And I think  
14    that's important to recognize.

15                    So please keep doing  
16    what you're doing. Thank you. And  
17    that's what I have to say today.

18                    MODERATOR:

19                    Thank you.

20                    Is there anyone else in  
21    the room that would like to speak  
22    that's not already registered?

23                    We're going to give our  
24    panel a ten minute break. So you will  
25    --- let's see, we'll be back at 4:45.



1 That's not correct. We will be back  
2 at 4:25. I'm sorry.

3 - - -

4 (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS HELD.)

5 - - -

6 MODERATOR:

7 Good afternoon. We're  
8 going to resume the public hearing.  
9 I'd like to call up the first speaker  
10 of Al Campbell.

11 Just go up to the desk  
12 there. And if you'll say your name  
13 and spell that for the court reporter,  
14 we'd appreciate it. Yes, go ahead.

15 MR. CAMPBELL:

16 Hi, my name's Alex  
17 Campbell, A-L-E-X, C-A-M-P-B-E-L-L.  
18 I'm a resident of South Park,  
19 Pittsburgh.

20 So I came here today. I  
21 don't really know what I'm going to  
22 say, so I just have a couple of my  
23 notes. But I think this is really  
24 important stuff. That's why I made a  
25 point to come down here and speak

1     today about the PRT, particularly  
2     around the proposed transit cuts - - -  
3     or route cuts.

4                     While I'm actively  
5     advocating for funding solutions to  
6     support PRT, I believe there's also an  
7     urgent need for immediate operational  
8     improvements. I don't think funding  
9     alone will resolve a lot of the root  
10    issues that the PRT has been  
11    challenged with since the pandemic and  
12    the rider decreases.

13                    In terms of looking at  
14    some of the operational, you know,  
15    pieces as a rider daily from the  
16    Silver Line Station. You know, I'm  
17    not against all the other public cuts,  
18    to be honest. I get it. I'm a  
19    management consultant, so I'm  
20    frequently looking at things like  
21    data, cost of operations and things  
22    like that.

23                    However, I see issues  
24    that are, I think, ignored,  
25    particularly around things like data

1 integrity. I don't believe that the  
2 data that's being published around  
3 ridership data is accurate. I see  
4 daily that there's fare evasion and  
5 daily theft. There's multiple payment  
6 solutions that cannot be justifying  
7 cost of the investment into those  
8 multiple payment solutions.

9 There's also been  
10 minimal responses to route cuts. You  
11 know, in the past I've seen some  
12 changes since the pandemic, but I  
13 don't think there had been enough  
14 adaptation to what was going on.  
15 Basically from the outside  
16 perspective, we watched as basically  
17 negative impacts continued to impact  
18 the PRT and there was minimal changes,  
19 or at least not enough changes to  
20 react to that quick enough.

21 I think that to move  
22 forward, there needs to be more  
23 creative ideas to come out of this. I  
24 don't think it's acceptable to say  
25 we're not going to get the funding,

1 we're going to cut these routes and  
2 then when the government proposed to  
3 give, you know, a portion of the  
4 funding, the same plan was proposed.  
5 I think that's unacceptable.

6 Some creative ideas, I  
7 think that should be explored and I  
8 don't know, you know, all the  
9 specifics of how beneficial those  
10 would be, but at least for some things  
11 like Silver Lines or long bus routes,  
12 I think the opportunity for things  
13 like bullet trains or bullet routes  
14 could be proposed and increase  
15 ridership.

16 I think that we need to  
17 look at the downtown area where it's  
18 been basically free for all riders.  
19 They're subsidized, I think in the  
20 past. I'm not, I'm not sure. I  
21 wasn't able to confirm if that's still  
22 being subsidized in the city areas,  
23 but I don't think that all riders  
24 should have free access in the city.  
25 I know a lot of people disagree with

1       that, but.

2                       You know, I'll just kind  
3       of close here, that's my time. I  
4       think we really need to look at the  
5       operational efficiency, the technology  
6       being used, the decision making from  
7       the PRT, as well as, you know,  
8       advocating obviously for increases to  
9       budget solutions. We need to do a  
10      little bit more to give continuous  
11      process improvement in order to get  
12      out of this hole that we found  
13      ourselves in. Thank you.

14                      MODERATOR:

15                      I'd like to call our  
16      next speaker, Janet Evans. Janet  
17      Evans?

18                      MS. EVANS:

19                      Sometimes we don't have  
20      a lot of ---. I was wondering if we  
21      can get a bus that has more than three  
22      slots to go to Harrisburg and talk to  
23      the Governor. And also we can send a  
24      letter to either Congress or the  
25      president and speak to him how

1 important transportation is in  
2 Pittsburgh. Not only in Philadelphia,  
3 but people do ride Port Authority.

4 And to me it's important  
5 that bus drivers are trained really  
6 well, especially when people like  
7 myself get down the ramps to make sure  
8 that the ramp is sturdy enough for  
9 people like myself. I do have a  
10 little bit of hard times when I'm  
11 driving my chair and I had fallen once  
12 and I did not report it because it was  
13 - - - I thought it was my fault. But  
14 when I looked and when I fell, the  
15 ramp wasn't down flat enough. But I'm  
16 not worried about that. I think this  
17 was a new driver and I didn't want him  
18 scolded or anything. But I'm fine.

19 But I've talked to one  
20 of you or both of you. I think there  
21 should be more slots in different  
22 areas on the bus for people with power  
23 chairs to get on. Because in my area  
24 in Glen Haven, the 57 and the 93,  
25 there's a lot of us. I think we're

1 almost 30 people in power chairs on  
2 Roselle Johnson in the high rise now.  
3 And a lot of us between 12:30 and I  
4 would say 2:30 in the day. There's  
5 like three of us at one time and then  
6 we're skipped. You know, we have to  
7 wait another hour. Thank you for  
8 listening. Thank you. By the way,  
9 access is good too.

10 MODERATOR:

11 Next speaker is Jackson  
12 Burgess. Is Jackson here?

13 Okay. You will have up  
14 to three minutes to give testimony.

15 MR. BURGESS:

16 Okay. Let me just clear  
17 --- I'm getting a notification or an  
18 Amber alert.

19 MODERATOR:

20 I think --- tornado.

21 MR. BURGESS:

22 Right. I feel safe in  
23 here.

24 Hello, my name is  
25 Jackson Burgess, J-A-C-K-S-O-N,

1 B-U-R-G-E-S-S, and I am a new resident  
2 of Pennsylvania. I just moved from  
3 Columbus, Ohio. Born and raised in  
4 Cincinnati. Notably two places  
5 missing reliable, efficient and  
6 convenient public transit.

7 When my wife and I  
8 decided to make the move to Pittsburgh  
9 to be closer to family, I knew that I  
10 would be utilizing the public transit  
11 system in Pittsburgh to get to know  
12 the city and the people better. I was  
13 fortunate enough to be fully employed  
14 in downtown Pittsburgh. And now I use  
15 it to commute. I use the Silver Line.

16 We all know the  
17 challenge is facing the housing  
18 market. My wife and I are trying to  
19 start a family. When I'm looking for  
20 a new house that was in our price  
21 range, and among the several factors  
22 we considered was proximity to a  
23 reliable public transit network.

24 I fortunately am in a  
25 position where if, you know, worst



1 case scenario, these funding cuts do  
2 happen, we don't receive that cash  
3 from the state government, I am  
4 fortunate enough to be in a position  
5 where I would be able to just get in a  
6 car and drive downtown to my job. It  
7 would be stressful driving down there.  
8 I don't know if y'all have driven down  
9 there. Since it's new to me, it's a  
10 lot. The congestion. I wouldn't be  
11 the only new person driving downtown  
12 to go to work.

13 People might decide  
14 altogether to not go downtown. Now  
15 you're missing out on sales tax for  
16 the City of Pittsburgh and all of the  
17 other things. Now you have food  
18 vendors that can't pay their rent.  
19 Now they are leaving.

20 Next thing you know - - -  
21 in the short term, this is a transit  
22 problem. In the long term, this is a  
23 city problem. And I think that we  
24 should do everything and put our best  
25 foot forward in receiving that funds

1 and connecting us to downtown better.  
2 So thank you.

3 MODERATOR:

4 Our next speaker is  
5 Bethanie Paul. Bethanie?

6 MS. PAUL:

7 Hello. So, like Jack, I  
8 also use public transit to get to work  
9 downtown. I've worked downtown for  
10 about three years, and I, quite  
11 frankly, love riding the bus to work.  
12 It is my downtime. I'm a busy mother,  
13 and I like to just sit there and read.  
14 I really don't want to have to drive  
15 downtown.

16 My commute, I get on at  
17 either the Crafton or Ingram stop on  
18 the west busway. So obviously, with  
19 --- you know, I deep dived into the  
20 proposed changes. So on my way in,  
21 currently, I can ride one of four  
22 buses. I'm very, very lucky to have  
23 that convenience. I will say three of  
24 them will no longer be an option. And  
25 they're extending the ---, the G2,

1     which is the only one that would  
2     remain.

3                     I don't know how - - -  
4     like, right now, getting on in the  
5     morning, any one of the four buses is  
6     full. There's going to be no way  
7     people are going to be able to get on  
8     the G2 to go to work.

9                     So I don't really care  
10    about the getting home part from  
11    there. It's kind of pointless. If I  
12    can't get to work, I'm not going to  
13    ride the bus home. So - - - and then on  
14    the way home - - - I guess I'll go there  
15    anyway. But if I do park at the  
16    Crafton stop, I can get on the G2  
17    currently or the 29, because there's a  
18    stop right by the parking lot there.  
19    29 proposed cut, gone.

20                    So again, it's just  
21    really impactful and I'd rather not  
22    drive. So please consider. Keep  
23    working towards not eliminating all of  
24    these routes. I'd really appreciate  
25    it.

1                   MODERATOR:

2                   Thank you.

3                   Tracy Cole?

4                   MS. COLE:

5                   Hi, I'm Tracy Cole,

6                   T-R-A-C-Y, C-O-L-E.

7                   I work downtown, and I  
8                   rely on public transportation to get  
9                   here. Two of my buses are proposed to  
10                  be eliminated, the P7, which is really  
11                  important because it's an express bus  
12                  to get to downtown. And then the P76  
13                  would be eliminated as well.

14                 That leaves the 61C. It  
15                 takes well over an hour to get  
16                 downtown from the Duquesne Park and  
17                 Ride. That's a lot. And then if that  
18                 route is going to be --- I think it's  
19                 running --- it would be running about  
20                 three times an hour. That's just not  
21                 often enough. That would put just a  
22                 huge burden on me as far as having to  
23                 drive. There's rush hour traffic to  
24                 deal with. I would like to be able to  
25                 sit on the bus and take it.

1                   And I don't understand  
2                   how anybody else would be able to get  
3                   downtown from that area too. There's  
4                   other working professionals who need  
5                   to get downtown. And you know, just  
6                   consider some of us, we - - - this is  
7                   what we would need to get downtown.

8                   I do have a car. Yes, I  
9                   could do that. Parking is not really  
10                  affordable downtown at all. So just  
11                  something to consider and I'm really  
12                  hoping that there's a resolution that  
13                  can be found for us all. Thank you.

14                  MODERATOR:

15                  Tayvon Kevin Smith.

16                  MR. SMITH:

17                  Great day, my name is  
18                  Tayvon Kevin Smith. I'm here to tell  
19                  you that our transit service in  
20                  Allegheny County, will be  
21                  transformative. Our demand comes from  
22                  the people and for the people.  
23                  Because those of us who use the  
24                  transit system are the ones that are  
25                  experts with each of our lived

1 experiences with transit systems that  
2 we've had over a lifetime.

3 I'm a lifelong transit  
4 rider and many people in my family and  
5 in my community are transit riders as  
6 well. I know the struggle and the  
7 consequences of settling for poor  
8 services and the impact of decades of  
9 transit service cuts on me and my  
10 family. I also know how our visionary  
11 service plan, a plan that has transit  
12 services that meets the needs of our  
13 region, could change everything.

14 First and foremost, I'm  
15 a parent. If transit came more  
16 frequently, I would be able to secure  
17 a better job to increase the  
18 possibility of owning a home and  
19 providing for my kids. I spend so  
20 much time waiting for transit and  
21 waiting for buses that don't show up,  
22 which makes infrequently scheduled  
23 buses that much worse.

24 If transit were more  
25 available, that time I spent every day

1 just traveling to get my kids, my 90  
2 year old grandmother and to my job  
3 that I recently got furloughed from  
4 and to run my basic errands would be  
5 time that I would be spending with my  
6 children, my grandmother, family and a  
7 new job.

8 Bad transit services  
9 robs me of my family life and a fair  
10 and sustainable career that would help  
11 me protect and provide for my kids and  
12 family.

13 I am a caretaker of my  
14 90 year old grandmother along with so  
15 many of my aunts and uncles who are  
16 also transit riders. If transit  
17 services ran more often and to more  
18 places, we would have the ability to  
19 be at both of my grandmother's sides  
20 to help they'll meet more of their  
21 basic needs.

22 It would astronomically  
23 change the landscape of our elder care  
24 here in Allegheny County because not  
25 only could my grandmothers get out and

1 go places when they was feeling well,  
2 but nurses and caretakers like my  
3 aunts, myself, uncles and mother could  
4 go early and stay later and still have  
5 public transportation home.

6 Recently my grandmother  
7 needed to update her ID at the DMV and  
8 go to the downtown service station to  
9 renew her Senior Connect Card. These  
10 two small errands have become an all  
11 day affair that no car driver would  
12 ever have experienced because we do  
13 not have the quality service that we  
14 need and deserve.

15 A healthy transit  
16 service gives us back our dignity and  
17 our time with those that we love the  
18 most. Quality transit can provide  
19 safety. It can provide freedom.  
20 Having transit services that run late  
21 allows me to trust that my kids can  
22 get home safe after school and if they  
23 go to events. I can meet them at the  
24 bus stop close to home. I have  
25 friends with disabilities and quality



1 transit service allows them to  
2 experience more of Pittsburgh and be  
3 more independent.

4 We've seen and said that  
5 the decision to cut transit service  
6 about 40 percent over the last 20  
7 years has trapped people in their  
8 homes and restricted where transit  
9 riders are able to afford to live and  
10 still get around.

11 So I'm saying to you,  
12 funding PRT will open up worlds, whole  
13 parts of the county where people like  
14 me, like my grandmother, like my kids,  
15 like my friends in the service sector,  
16 like my friends with disabilities, can  
17 afford to live, to work and to play  
18 and not sacrifice our time, our  
19 safety, our relationships and our  
20 dignity.

21 It's a decision that our  
22 elected leaders have in front of them.  
23 A vision to enact the will of we the  
24 people. Transit should always be in  
25 motion and it's time to see progress,

1 not decline of our transit services.  
2 The very heartbeat of our city lies in  
3 the understanding, implementing of a  
4 fair and accessible transit system  
5 that works for all of us.

6 It's a decision, a  
7 vision of the people and our transit  
8 services that will place the future of  
9 transit at the very fingertips of  
10 those we serve. Our aim as transit  
11 advocates, activists, operators and  
12 organizers will always be at the very  
13 doorsteps of we the people. All of us  
14 will be impacted the most by our  
15 transit system and/or the lack  
16 thereof.

17 So today and for every  
18 day thereafter, let's jump aboard of  
19 our visionary transit buses and trains  
20 united so that we can show and instill  
21 in our communities across the  
22 Commonwealth and the world the  
23 confidence that we are truly a people  
24 united, a movement that will be driven  
25 into the future. Let's show the world

1     that we really are the most livable  
2     city of all. A vision for transit is  
3     always in motion and transformative  
4     when we work together.

5                     MODERATOR:

6                     Thank you.

7                     Constance Berger

8     (phonetic).

9                     MS. BERGER:

10                    Okay. My name is  
11     Constance Berger. I've been an access  
12     rider for 46 years. I asked Karen  
13     Hess how long the service had been  
14     going.

15                    I wrote this --- this  
16     testimony is set up having to do with  
17     how long I've lived in nursing homes  
18     which is about 31 years. I'll start  
19     --- I'll read the testimony.

20                    Hello, my name is  
21     Constance Berger. I live in  
22     Southwestern Nursing and Rehab Center.  
23     Access has been my mode of  
24     transportation since I have been in  
25     this facility for over 11 years ---

1 and a half years and have been in  
2 nursing home facilities for about  
3 around 31 years.

4 The budget cuts are  
5 going to be devastating to me. I  
6 received a letter on March 22nd, 2025  
7 that says the proposed service cuts  
8 are going to impact me when I go to  
9 Blessed Trinity Church, Steel's Grill  
10 and my sister in law's house.

11 This is --- this means I  
12 will not be able to leave my nursing  
13 home, go to church, visit family, go  
14 out shopping or eat at restaurants and  
15 just be independent over all. I will  
16 be stranded in the nursing home and  
17 not be able to get out. Me being able  
18 to go --- wait a minute. To go out  
19 and go places are very important in my  
20 lifestyle.

21 I am physically  
22 disabled. I'm a physically disabled  
23 person with cerebral palsy and can  
24 only go around in my electric  
25 wheelchair.

1                   If it - - - it will be  
2     hard for me to pay for trips if the  
3     fare increase is to go into effect. I  
4     have no other transportation to me  
5     besides access and I have no family  
6     members that will be able to assist me  
7     as they do not have wheelchair  
8     accessible vehicles. My overall  
9     mental - - - wait a minute. And  
10    physical health would be jeopardized  
11    if this transit were to be stopped.

12                  Please take into  
13    consideration my concerns as well as  
14    others as this is our way of living  
15    independently. Thank you, Connie  
16    Berger.

17                  MODERATOR:

18                  Thank you.

19                  Dawn Bartlett?

20                  MS. BARTLETT:

21                  Hi there. My name is  
22    Dawn Bartlett and I just moved to  
23    Pittsburgh about two and a half months  
24    ago.

25                  When I went to college,

1 I went to Arizona State University and  
2 got my degree in urban planning.  
3 Before I picked Pittsburgh, I ranked  
4 every major city in America on a very  
5 intense rubric and Pittsburgh far and  
6 away came off the best city that I  
7 could possibly go to. I'm looking at  
8 climate change, I'm looking at  
9 community preparedness, culture,  
10 everything here. This place is  
11 amazing.

12 The only drawback I had  
13 on that form for Pittsburgh was  
14 lacking a robust public transit  
15 network. But I mean, at least it's  
16 got something.

17 I sold my car when I  
18 moved here, planned to get around by  
19 bicycle, and found out Rialto Hill is  
20 a little terrifying. I'm not scared  
21 of riding up a hill. I'm scared of  
22 cars on a narrow road while riding up  
23 a hill.

24 And so I've come to rely  
25 on the bus network here, and I find it

1 more or less usable. The routes are  
2 not close quite frequent enough, so  
3 I'm pretty consistently late. But I  
4 get by.

5 Now I'm a little worried  
6 at the concept of privatization of all  
7 public goods and public transit  
8 switching over to private transit,  
9 where the city buys roads for drivers,  
10 isn't just unhealthy. It's expensive.  
11 And it's more expensive than public  
12 transit is in the short term. And I  
13 don't think anybody here actually  
14 wants to see less public transit. I  
15 think this is an outside influence  
16 working its way in. And I find that  
17 power dynamic really frustrating  
18 because I think all the people in the  
19 city would like to continue to have  
20 public transit.

21 And I'm curious --- I  
22 heard a little about how the funding  
23 works. I'm curious if there is any  
24 way of pursuing transitioning to a  
25 more localized system because it's

1 just better for not just people's  
2 mental health, physical health, air  
3 quality, the amount we pay for roads,  
4 road maintenance, there is no  
5 situation where buses and trains are  
6 not cheaper and better for the city  
7 and its residents. So I think most  
8 people would agree with that. So  
9 thank you very much.

10 MODERATOR:

11 Thank you.

12 Christopher Beam.

13 MR. BEAM:

14 Hello. My name is  
15 Christopher Beam. I'm a resident of  
16 Bloomfield.

17 I ride transit semi  
18 frequently. I use it mainly to get to  
19 Southside and back. My wife works in  
20 Southside. She takes the bus  
21 frequently as well. But I go there to  
22 climb at Ascend. I go there to meet  
23 up with some friends to shop at REI.  
24 And 54 goes direct from Bloomfield to  
25 Southside. It's perfect. It runs



1 super late at night. When college is  
2 in session. There are a ton of kids  
3 on - - - kids. There are a ton of  
4 college students on the bus coming  
5 home at night, and we don't want those  
6 people on the road.

7 Transit is super  
8 important. It keeps people who should  
9 not be driving off the road. It keeps  
10 people who are inebriated off road.  
11 And for people who have lost driving  
12 privileges, it provides a way for them  
13 to continue to contribute at their  
14 job. Socially it keeps them engaged  
15 in society.

16 The proposed cuts, I  
17 know no one up here wants them to  
18 happen, but they would be absolutely  
19 devastating to Pittsburgh region. We  
20 would accelerate a decline as a region  
21 without the transit system that we  
22 have and just super important we keep  
23 it.

24 I echo the previous  
25 commentary about trying to look for

1 opportunities for us to avoid needing  
2 to constantly beg a reluctant state to  
3 fund our own transit. I know that  
4 we're currently only, I think, legally  
5 permitted to fund our transit system  
6 with like a drink tax, but it would be  
7 great if we could fund it with  
8 property taxes, with maybe a small  
9 sales tax, with Rideshare or delivery  
10 app taxes. I think providing a  
11 diverse suite of local funding options  
12 would really help us avoid future  
13 conversations so that as our region  
14 grows, we are better able to provide  
15 steady streams of funding to our  
16 transit, which without it, we're not  
17 going to grow at all.

18 So thank you so much.  
19 Really hoping that the state is able  
20 to step up. Thank you.

21 MODERATOR:

22 Thank you.

23 We don't have anyone in  
24 the next couple of time slots, so if  
25 there's anyone in the room who is not

1 registered to speak, who would like to  
2 speak or if you're registered and you  
3 would maybe like to take an earlier  
4 time slot, you can do that as well.

5 MR. SCOTT:

6 Good evening. My name  
7 is Bill Scott, B-I-L-L, S-C-O-T-T, and  
8 I'm operator and part of the executive  
9 board with our own local union here in  
10 Pittsburgh.

11 Number one, I just want  
12 to thank everyone for setting up this  
13 forum here and I also want to let you  
14 all know, thank you for coming  
15 because, I mean, when you see a bus  
16 operator, I mean, we are - - - - . And  
17 one of the beautiful things about this  
18 event taking place right now, most of  
19 the folks, probably everyone,  
20 including myself, we got here because  
21 of the bus. So that alone should let  
22 everybody know how important  
23 transportation truly is, you know,  
24 here in the Commonwealth.

25 And me, I'm always - - - I

1 mean, I've been serving Pittsburgh for  
2 close to 30 years. Five here with  
3 Port Authority and 25 in, you know,  
4 other venues in terms of education and  
5 sales. But I've always, you know, had  
6 a hand in work in the community and  
7 I've always, you know, utilized public  
8 transportation as well.

9 So I was a college  
10 student, you know, caught the bus,  
11 relied on the bus, you know, to play  
12 sports. You know, I was without a  
13 vehicle, you know, for a long time.  
14 So I understand the struggle, you  
15 know, that you all are going through.

16 Testing?

17 MS. KELLEMAN:

18 Just start yelling at  
19 us.

20 MR. SCOTT:

21 Oh, okay. Okay.

22 I'm going to go without  
23 the microphone, but I like to be  
24 solution based. So I understand --- I  
25 mean, naturally there's a potential,

1     you know, for layoffs to take place,  
2     unnecessary - - - .

3                     MS. KELLEMAN:

4                     We just aren't getting  
5     it recorded, but - - - .

6                     MR. SCOTT:

7                     I got you. It's  
8     necessary and funding doesn't take  
9     place. But I'd like to kind of look  
10    at it another way where we can  
11    actually reward those who have paved  
12    the way, you know, for Port Authority,  
13    meaning our senior operators, you  
14    know, give them, you know, some type  
15    of incentive, you know, that would - - -  
16    because when you're doing layoffs,  
17    health care and payroll, usually the  
18    biggest expenditures that you're  
19    looking to shave off.

20                    And to me, laying off  
21    brand new operators who are at the  
22    lower end of the scale, to me, is not  
23    really effective more so than giving  
24    someone an incentive, you know, who  
25    have helped, you know, provide this

1 platform and give them an opportunity  
2 to, you know, let, you know, the  
3 system operate effectively without  
4 having to lose anyone in the grand  
5 scheme of things. And naturally,  
6 without you guys, there's no operators  
7 and without us collectively, I mean,  
8 there's no Port Authority. So thank  
9 you for your time.

10 MS. KELLEMAN:

11 Thank you.

12 Everybody, so we don't  
13 have a PA system and this really big  
14 is coming in so we don't want you  
15 going anywhere, but we're going to  
16 take a break while everything is  
17 crazy. Is that okay? If the power  
18 goes out we'll tell ghost stories with  
19 our phones as like our, you know,  
20 flashlights. But please stay here  
21 because it sounds like it's getting  
22 real nasty outside.

23 - - -

24 (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS HELD.)

25 - - -

1                   MS. KELLEMAN:

2                   Michael McCoy?

3                   MR. MCCOY:

4                   Can you guys hear me?

5                   MS. KELLEMAN:

6                   Oh, we've got power,  
7                   yes, thank you.

8                   MR. MCCOY:

9                   Hooray for power.

10                  So I have been living in  
11                  Pittsburgh for about six years. Came  
12                  out here originally for school. Went  
13                  to Pitt between 2019 and 2023. Stayed  
14                  out here for work, because I just ---  
15                  I love the city so much. Love the  
16                  community that I built here --- or the  
17                  community that I've been able to,  
18                  like, you know, come into here. And,  
19                  yeah, I just love everything about  
20                  Pittsburgh. And the bus system is,  
21                  like it's very essential for me day to  
22                  day.

23                  As a student, because of  
24                  COVID I wasn't able to use it as much  
25                  as I wanted to, but I depend on it

1       nowadays to go to work every single  
2       day. And, you know, if I want to go,  
3       say, to South Side, I live in East  
4       Liberty right now, I was able to take  
5       75 down and, you know, go to the South  
6       Side for a bit. And that's something  
7       that I was very grateful that I was  
8       able to do.

9                       And, you know, I feel  
10       like one thing that, you know, PRT has  
11       going in its favor right now is the  
12       fact that I don't feel the need to  
13       check to see what times the buses are  
14       going. Generally, at least like  
15       during the day, obviously, night time  
16       is a different story. But obviously,  
17       with all these budget cuts, it's  
18       unfortunate that, like, okay, like,  
19       that might have to become a reality,  
20       not just for me, but for many people  
21       who, you know, are used to having  
22       buses go, you know, pretty much around  
23       the clock.

24                      And yeah, I understand,  
25       obviously, money is a big issue, and I



1     feel like this is important enough  
2     where, you know, we need funding. And  
3     I think that's all I got.

4                     MS. KELLEMAN:

5                     Thank you. Thanks for  
6     braving the weather and getting  
7     soaked.

8                     MR. MCCOY:

9                     Oh, yeah, absolutely.

10                    MS. KELLEMAN:

11                    Thank you.

12                    MODERATOR:

13

14                    Thank You.

15                    We do not have any more  
16     other registered speakers at this  
17     time. So if there's anyone in the  
18     room who did not have an opportunity  
19     to speak and would like to do so, you  
20     can come to the front of our room and  
21     just give us your name.

22                    MR. STOCKMAN:

23                    Hello everyone. It's  
24     good to see some familiar faces. I am  
25     a PRT staff member, - - -

1                   MS. KELLEMAN:

2                   You're here in a  
3                   civilian capacity.

4                   MR. STOCKMAN:

5                   - - - but before I was a  
6                   PRT staff member, I was a long time  
7                   PRT rider. And I'm here today in my  
8                   most important capacity, which is that  
9                   of a citizen.

10                  Port Authority - - - old  
11                  habits die hard. PRT, as many  
12                  testified is a lifeline. But I would  
13                  argue that more than just the service  
14                  that it provides. It is also  
15                  something that is increasingly area in  
16                  this country and that is social  
17                  infrastructure. We are, at a time  
18                  when Americans are feeling scared and  
19                  alone, seeing the increasing retreat  
20                  of these services and these assets  
21                  that we have in common is just  
22                  exacerbating that.

23                  So it's not just for me  
24                  a way to get to work or a way for  
25                  someone to get to their dialysis

1     appointment. It's a way for me to  
2     feel like I'm a part of a community  
3     and a part of the community that has  
4     been good to me over my life. And an  
5     agency that during a time when I was  
6     too young for a driver's license, I  
7     didn't have access to a car. I had a  
8     mother with breast cancer who had  
9     three other kids to deal with. That's  
10    how I got around as a kid. And that  
11    gave me freedom. It provided a  
12    benefit for my entire family. And  
13    I'll always be grateful that that  
14    service was available. And I shudder  
15    to think about a future where there  
16    are going to be people who won't have  
17    access to what I did.

18                   So Pittsburgh is a  
19    transit city. There aren't that many  
20    of those left in this country. Once  
21    it leaves, it rarely comes back. And  
22    when it does, it usually doesn't do so  
23    to the same extent that it used to.

24                   So I think it's  
25    important that we fight for what we

1 have here. I think it's important  
2 that we think not only about the  
3 people that we're serving today, but  
4 the people who we could be serving in  
5 the future and about the strategic  
6 advantage that Pittsburgh has being a  
7 legacy transit city at a time where  
8 people want that. They want to be  
9 able to live in a place where they  
10 don't need a car. They want to live  
11 in a place where they feel connected  
12 to their neighbors. They want to live  
13 in a place where people are making  
14 investments in the future. And  
15 Pittsburgh has the potential to be all  
16 of those. But it requires funding, it  
17 requires support. And fortunately, we  
18 have a great team here that's working  
19 to make that happen.

20 So appreciate all of you  
21 and we're all in this together.

22 MS. KELLEMAN:

23 Before you sit down - - -  
24 come back.

25 MODERATOR:

1 I'm sorry, we need your  
2 name for the public record for the  
3 court reporter.

4 MR. STOCKMAN:

5 Of course.

6 MS. KELLEMAN:

7 Birthday, blood type.

8 MR. STOCKMAN:

9 Of course.

10 MODERATOR:

11 Thank you.

12 MR. STOCKMAN:

13 My government. John  
14 Cameron Stockman, S-T-O-C-K-M-A-N.

15 - - -

16 (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS HELD.)

17 - - -

18 MODERATOR:

19  
20 You're Anne Kramer?

21 MS. KRAMER:

22 I am.

23 MODERATOR:

24 Okay.

25 Can you just say and

1 spell your name for the court  
2 reporter?

3 MS. KRAMER:

4 Of course, of course.  
5 My name is Anne Kramer. It's A-N-N-E,  
6 K-R-A-M-E-R, and I'm a resident of  
7 Pittsburgh. I live downtown.

8 And I want to say thank  
9 you all for being here. It really  
10 means a lot to me that you're here to  
11 listen to all of us who show up. And  
12 it's --- I think it's really important  
13 that we do show up and not only  
14 represent ourselves, but everybody we  
15 know who can't, for many reasons who  
16 just aren't able to show up here. So  
17 I think it's really important that we  
18 acknowledge that. So thank you.

19 The PRT is really  
20 important to me. I take it every day.  
21 I take it to work and from work and  
22 while I --- we could choose to drive.  
23 The PRT is a more neighbor friendly,  
24 and this is a neighborhood and  
25 neighbor focused city and I'd like us

1 to continue being that. It's a way  
2 that people can be together even if  
3 they don't need to interact with each  
4 other.

5 And it's also a way that  
6 we can be a greener city. And that's  
7 something that we have for a very long  
8 time, very focused on. It's a way  
9 that we have been able to choose to  
10 let our children go to work --- or go  
11 to school and go to places that they'd  
12 like to be able to get to without  
13 needing to be in a car. Or have ---  
14 they're able to have a little bit of  
15 autonomy and grow up a little bit as  
16 their parents can let them, you know,  
17 have a little bit. And then our  
18 seniors are so dependent on the PRT  
19 because it gives them some options  
20 when they would like to also retain  
21 the autonomy that they've had their  
22 entire lives.

23 And so it seems like,  
24 yeah, it's just, you know, we're just  
25 --- you know, for all of who are just

1     working, we're just working and we're  
2     just taking the PRT, but there's  
3     actually this disconnect of tissue  
4     throughout our city. And so it's very  
5     important that we're able to keep it.  
6     Thank you very much.

7                     MS. KELLEMAN:

8                     Thank you.

9                     MODERATOR:

10                    Joe Galluzzo?

11                    MR. GALLUZZO:

12                    My name is Joe Galluzzo.  
13     That's J-O-E, G-A-L-L-U-Z-Z-O. I live  
14     downtown and I use the PRT quite  
15     frequently. I live and work downtown  
16     and I often use it for going to social  
17     events.

18                    A lot of people I know  
19     use it for commuting, but I really  
20     depend on the PRT to go to lecture  
21     series, to go --- we're members of  
22     ---. We love to go from downtown to  
23     Oakland. That's a very popular  
24     corridor. And I've noticed that when  
25     the buses aren't coming as frequently



1 or there's a breakdown, it makes it  
2 harder getting out there. And while I  
3 could take a car, it's annoying, it's  
4 frustrating, I don't really like it.  
5 I'd much rather take the bus and, you  
6 know, meet with the people that are on  
7 the bus. We've actually had quite a  
8 few lively conversations on the way  
9 there and back with multiple people.  
10 And it's just something that I feel is  
11 important.

12 And when the service  
13 cuts come in any way, shape or form,  
14 it's really difficult to want to take  
15 the bus. If the bus comes around less  
16 frequently, it's less convenient. And  
17 it means that you're more likely to  
18 get on the road in your car and cause  
19 more congestion, more wear and tear on  
20 your car, more wear and tear on the  
21 streets, quite frankly. I don't know  
22 about you guys, but some of the  
23 potholes around here have - - - you  
24 know, seem like they could swallow a  
25 fairly large size tire.

1                   And so, you know, to me  
2     it just seems like a better way of  
3     getting around the city. And it's  
4     something that I depend on and like.  
5     And so I do not want to see any  
6     service cuts come to the PRT because  
7     it's something I really enjoy. In  
8     fact, I'd rather see our service being  
9     increased. Thank you.

10                   - - -

11     (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS HELD.)

12                   - - -

13                   MS. KELLEMAN:

14                   Okay, so for everyone  
15     who stayed here including Karen, PRT's  
16     records indicate that we have no  
17     remaining speakers registered to  
18     provide comment at this public hearing  
19     who have not already provided their  
20     comments or were given the opportunity  
21     to provide their comments. We are now  
22     at 6:58 and since it's three minutes  
23     for speaking, we are at the end time  
24     for this hearing.

25                   So we will now conclude

1 the public hearing and on behalf of  
2 PRT's Board and staff, thank you  
3 everyone who took the time to  
4 participate, people who stayed here  
5 forever, weather notwithstanding. We  
6 thank everyone who took the time to  
7 participate today and provide PRT with  
8 comments regarding the proposed  
9 funding crisis related fiscal '26 fare  
10 increases and service reductions.

11 Our next public hearing  
12 starts at 9:00 a.m. on May 6th at  
13 Soldiers and Sailors in Oakland. A  
14 third public hearing is scheduled for  
15 9:00 a.m. on June 12th back here at  
16 the convention center. And I'm going  
17 to hit this and then we're all free to  
18 go.

19 \* \* \* \* \*

20 HEARING CONCLUDED AT 6:58 P.M.

21 \* \* \* \* \*

## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.  
Dated the 13th day of May, 2025

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chelsea Curry", written over a horizontal line.

Chelsea Curry,

Court Reporter

# Public Hearing 1

**Date: 4/29/2025**

**Location: Convention Center**

**Room: Auxiliary**

**Time: Morning**

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED  
SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND FARE INCREASE

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: EDDIE PHILLIPS,  
Hearing Moderator  
James MacNeil, Member

HEARING: Tuesday, April 29, 2025  
9:17 a.m.

LOCATION: David L. Lawrence  
Convention Center  
3rd Floor  
1000 Ft. Duquesne Boulevard  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

WITNESSES: None offered

Reporter: Benjamin Morrow

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## A P P E A R A N C E S

ALSO PRESENT:

ALEXANDRA FRANK

SONIA KAIL

ANGELA WELCH

ZANE AQRA

CAMERON TAYLOR

ALEX ELLSWORTH

ROBERT FOWLER

ALEXANDER MORRIS

JUDE FOSSUM

TYERIC WORSHAM

TRISTAN TURNER

ALICIA SALVADEO

NOAH SINDLER

IKLAS DAVIS

HUGH O'CONNOR

KELLY TURK

VESHAЕ HARRIS

AMY SILBERMANN

MARY REIHING

DONALD RUSSELL

AILEEN ZURIENSKI

SHAWN PASTOR

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3

I N D E X

|                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------|
| DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES | 5 - 55 |
| CERTIFICATE              | 56     |



## E X H I B I T S

| <u>Number</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Page<br/>Offered</u> |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
|               | NONE OFFERED       |                         |

## P R O C E E D I N G S

-----  
MR. MACNEIL:

My name is James MacNeil.  
I'm the Deputy Chief Transportation  
Officer for Pittsburgh Regional  
Transit.

I is conducting this  
public hearing as part of a public  
comment period that began 8:00 a.m.,  
Monday, March 31st, 2025, and will  
conclude on Wednesday, June 18th, 2025  
at 5:00 p.m. to receive public input on  
I's proposed funding crisis, related  
fare increases, and service reductions.

INTERPRETER:

Do you want --- do you  
want us to do the Spanish? For every  
pause you make?

MR. MACNEIL:

Yes, you can.

INTERPRETER:

Okay.

MR. MACNEIL:

Before we begin to

1 receive public comment, our hearing  
2 moderator, Eddie Phillips, will go over  
3 some housekeeping information.

4 MR. PHILLIPS:

5 Thank you. This hearing  
6 is being recorded and transcribed by a  
7 Court Reporter. If you do not want to  
8 be recorded, please exit the hearing at  
9 this time. Please note that we have  
10 American Sign Language and Spanish  
11 language interpreters to provide  
12 translation services during the  
13 hearing.

14 For participants who  
15 registered to provide public comment at  
16 today's hearing, you will be called  
17 upon to speak at your designated time,  
18 though you may be called by as much as  
19 15 minutes early to speak if there are  
20 no other speakers scheduled to speak.  
21 For participants who did not pre-  
22 register, you have been placed into an  
23 open time slot to speak, and will be  
24 called upon to speak at your designated  
25 time, though you may also be called by

1 as much as 15 minutes early to speak if  
2 there are no other speakers scheduled  
3 to speak.

4 Each speaker will have  
5 three minutes to provide their public  
6 comment. When called upon, please  
7 clearly state your name and spell it,  
8 and then speak clearly. The hearing  
9 timekeeper will alert you when you have  
10 one minute remaining. If your three  
11 minutes is up and you want to provide  
12 further comment, you may do so via  
13 telephone, regular mail, or online  
14 until 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time  
15 on Wednesday, June 18th, 2025.

16 Additional details on these other  
17 methods to submit public comment to I  
18 regarding the proposed funding crisis  
19 related fiscal year 2026 fare increases  
20 and service reductions is available on  
21 I's website at [www.rideprt.org/funding-](http://www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis)  
22 [crisis](http://www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis).

23 Speakers cannot donate or  
24 delegate their allotted time to another  
25 individual interested in speaking, but

1 speakers may read in written comments  
2 they have brought with them on behalf  
3 of another individual during their  
4 scheduled comment time.

5 The purpose of this  
6 public hearing is for I to receive  
7 public comment only. Participating I  
8 Board members and/or staff members will  
9 not respond to public comment provided  
10 during this hearing, but all comments  
11 will be recorded and analyzed as part  
12 of the public comment collection  
13 process. Additionally, there is an  
14 information table set up outside the  
15 hearing room where I staff can answer  
16 questions.

17 Both I Board members and  
18 senior management will be listening to  
19 public comments during this public  
20 hearing. At this time, I would ask I  
21 Board members who are in attendance to  
22 identify themselves. I would now ask I  
23 senior management who are in attendance  
24 to identify themselves.

25 Say it again, yeah.

1                   MR. MACNEIL:

2                   James MacNeil, Deputy  
3 Chief Transportation Officer.

4                   INTERPRETER:

5                   And tell me your title  
6 again?

7                   MR. MACNEIL:

8                   James MacNeil, Deputy  
9 Chief Transportation Officer.

10                  MR. PHILLIPS:

11                  This public hearing was  
12 scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
13 and 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a two  
14 hour break from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

15                  I intends to conduct the  
16 public hearing for the entire  
17 advertised time periods to ensure  
18 members of the public who did not pre-  
19 register, but appear today and sign up  
20 to speak have an opportunity to do so.

21                  MR. MACNEIL:

22                  Thank you, Eddie.

23                  Absent additional state  
24 funding, I is facing an operating  
25 budget deficit of approximately \$100

1 million for its fiscal year 2026. I is  
2 required by law to pass a balanced  
3 budget, and with so many fixed costs,  
4 we are proposing 35 percent reduction  
5 in bus, light rail, and incline  
6 services. If approved by I's Board,  
7 these changes would begin with I's  
8 February 2026 service adjustments along  
9 with a \$0.25 cent fare increase.

10 Additionally, due to the  
11 severity of the budget deficit,  
12 corresponding reductions to service  
13 levels and increases in fares are also  
14 being proposed for I sponsored  
15 paratransit program, ACCESS. This  
16 program provides demand response  
17 transportation services for eligible  
18 individuals with disabilities and  
19 senior citizens in Allegheny County.

20 A summary of the proposed  
21 funding crisis related to fiscal year  
22 2026 fare increases and service  
23 reductions is provided below, and  
24 additional information is available on  
25 I's website at

1       www.rideprt.org/fundingcrisis.

2                       We will now begin  
3       receiving public comment.

4                       MR. PHILLIPS:

5                       Alexandra Frank. Come on  
6       up.

7                       MS. FRANK:

8                       My name is Alexandra  
9       Frank, A-L-E-X-A-N-D-R-A.

10                      I'm currently a college  
11       student, and I use public  
12       transportation to get to and attend my  
13       classes. This would not only extend  
14       the amount of time it takes me to get  
15       to and from, but it would also mean  
16       that it would also be more difficult  
17       for certain time slots that I have  
18       classes at. That it would increase  
19       that amount of time, and it would be  
20       difficult. And I'm also pursuing a  
21       disability, so in a few years when I  
22       move out, I will have to be using  
23       public transportation to get everywhere  
24       I need to go. And if a bus is  
25       eliminated and I need to go somewhere,



1       it might make it more difficult.

2                   MR. PHILLIPS:

3                   Thank you for your  
4       comment.

5                   MR. MACNEIL:

6                   I want to say, if your  
7       public comment period is done, if you  
8       want to attend, there's more public  
9       comment in the regular room. You're  
10      welcome to listen into that. Thank  
11      you.

12                   - - -

13      (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
14      THE PROCEEDINGS.)

15                   - - -

16                   MS. KAIL:

17                   Okay.

18                   Any who, what goes on  
19      here?

20                   MR. MACNEIL:

21                   So you have public  
22      comment period. I mean, we can brief  
23      what was read at the beginning, I'm  
24      sure. Three minutes to speak. We will  
25      not respond to anything. There is a

1 table out front for any type of  
2 questions and answers, but you have  
3 three minutes to speak. It is all  
4 recorded and documented.

5 MS. KAIL:

6 Okay, that's fine.

7 MR. MACNEIL:

8 You get a one minute  
9 warning when your time's almost up.

10 MS. KAIL:

11 Okay.

12 When you're --- all  
13 right. Anyway, I live in the south  
14 Hills of Mount Lebanon, and --- and  
15 hearing about the 41 and the 38 and,  
16 well the 36 doesn't affect me. But I  
17 got no family. I got no friends. I  
18 work in Bridgeville. I can't depend on  
19 anything but public transport but the  
20 41 or the 38 to get to work.

21 And that would ruin ---  
22 that will ruin me. Ruin my life, too.  
23 I would be unable to get to work. And  
24 if --- if the Port Authority eliminates  
25 the 41 and the 38, then --- and if

1       there's that 31 that goes around in  
2       Bridgeville, that would be a way longer  
3       route to get to work. That would be.  
4       That would be just no good. There's a  
5       lot - - - there's a lot of people who  
6       work at the hospital, Asbury Heights.  
7       I mean, I'm not sure how many people.  
8       Asbury Heights, the hospital, Cane  
9       Center, Providence Point. What are  
10      they all going to do?

11                   There's - - - I have no  
12      other way to get to work. I depend on  
13      these buses to get to work. And I'm  
14      not going to go look for a new job. I  
15      love my job. I - - - I work at the  
16      sports store in Bridgeville. I love my  
17      job. I'm good at my job. I can't go  
18      on - - - I can't go on unemployment. My  
19      unemployment's messed up. This is my  
20      - - - I love my job. It's my livelihood,  
21      and it would. It would completely ruin  
22      my life.

23                   We need these buses in  
24      the South Hills. We need them.  
25      Desperately need them. I'm pretty

1 shaken up about it. I really am. It's  
2 hitting me hard. It hurts. What would  
3 I do without these buses? I got  
4 nobody. So please don't cut them.

5 And I hope my voice gets  
6 heard. I hope you all consider what I  
7 have, what I said today, this morning.  
8 Please don't cut them. Thanks.

9 MR. MACNEIL:

10 Thank you. There is the  
11 main room, the main ballroom area where  
12 you see where the desks were. This is  
13 an overflow and - - - and for scheduling,  
14 for speaking. So it all gets  
15 documented and recorded, but you're  
16 welcome to attend the main room and  
17 listen to other public comment.

18 MS. KAIL:

19 Okay.

20 MR. MACNEIL:

21 And there's some desks  
22 outside of the main room. If you come  
23 out of here and make a left, I don't  
24 know if you saw them where you signed  
25 up, I'm sure, but they'll do some

1 questions and answers if you have any.

2 MS. KAIL:

3 Okay.

4 MR. MACNEIL:

5 Thank you.

6 - - -

7 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
8 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

9 - - -

10 MS. WELCH:

11 Come on in, have a seat.  
12 We may have to stand. Thank you. If  
13 you're a speaker, please stand in line  
14 over there. If you're a supporter,  
15 please have a seat or stand off to the  
16 side. Thank you. And there are some  
17 ground rules that we need to - - - that  
18 we need to listen to. Go ahead.

19 MR. PHILLIPS:

20 All right.

21 Good morning, everybody.  
22 My name is Eddie Phillips. I'm the  
23 moderator of today's event in this  
24 auxiliary room. I just want to go over  
25 a quick couple of housekeeping items

1 with the group. This hearing is being  
2 recorded and transcribed by a Court  
3 Reporter. If you do not want to be  
4 recorded, you can exit the hearing room  
5 at this time.

6 Each speaker will have  
7 three minutes to provide their public  
8 comment. When called upon, please  
9 clearly state your name and spell it,  
10 and then speak clearly. The hearing  
11 timekeeper will alert you when you have  
12 one minute remaining. If you have  
13 three minutes is up and you want to  
14 provide further comment, you may do so  
15 via telephone, mail or online until  
16 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday,  
17 June 18th, 2025. If anybody needs it,  
18 our website is [www.rideprt.org](http://www.rideprt.org) and  
19 /funding-crisis will lead you directly  
20 to where you want to go.

21 If you are finished  
22 before the three minutes is up, you may  
23 step off. We'll assume, and then the  
24 next person can come up. Okay?

25 MS. WELCH:

1                   Okay.

2                   Thank you.    Good morning.

3       My name is Angela Welch, A-N-G-E-L-A W-  
4       E-L-C-H, and I am the Chief Academic  
5       Officer and the assistant principal for  
6       the students that sit behind me. I  
7       come from City Charter High School, and  
8       just to give you some background, our  
9       school is located downtown on Stanwix  
10      Street. We have just under 600  
11      students and 100 employees that work at  
12      City Charter High School, and we rely  
13      solely on public transportation to get  
14      to school and to get to work throughout  
15      the year.

16                  We are a year round  
17      school. We function from mid-August  
18      all the way through the end of July,  
19      and staff work into the early August  
20      months. Our school would not be able  
21      to stay open if our students did not  
22      have access to the public  
23      transportation to take to school, and  
24      therefore would have to find  
25      alternative routes or not come to City

1 Charter High School as their high  
2 school, leaving them to go to their  
3 home school which could be considered a  
4 nonacademic, non-safe environment.

5 So, I'm asking to please  
6 consider not making these cuts because  
7 it would greatly affect the students of  
8 our region. They would not be able to  
9 get to school, activities, jobs, and so  
10 on, and their families would also not  
11 have access to our school community.

12 From here, I'm going to  
13 turn it over to our students who have  
14 some more comments and recommendations  
15 moving forward. Thank you for your  
16 time.

17 MR. AQRA:

18 Good morning. My name is  
19 Zane Aqra, Z-A-N-E A-Q-R-A.

20 Busing and transit is  
21 extremely vital to our area, our  
22 region. Our communities, sorry, I'm  
23 free balling a little bit. Our  
24 communities are extremely reliant on  
25 it, both economically and culturally.



1 As youth coming downtown every single  
2 day, it would be so much more  
3 difficult. Cutting this fund --- not  
4 being able to receive this funding  
5 would then backset our community by who  
6 knows how many years. We've already  
7 seen such a --- such a decline since  
8 COVID, 75 percent decline since COVID  
9 in ridership. And from this --- these  
10 cuts would just massively reduce that  
11 even more. Affecting our economy, our  
12 culture, events. We have the draft  
13 coming up next year. How do we think  
14 that the City will expand based on  
15 this? How do you think our communities  
16 will expand? How do you think our  
17 culture will expand?

18 The Golden Triangle has  
19 seen better years. It has improved in  
20 the last couple years, but these cuts  
21 would stall that improvement. Cutting  
22 funding and bus routes in Pittsburgh  
23 could be detrimental to our  
24 communities. Considering myself, my  
25 family, and my friends, we all rely on

1 Pittsburgh Transit in some way, whether  
2 it be to commute to school or even to  
3 run groceries or other necessities.

4 Earth would also heavily  
5 suffer from the increased greenhouse  
6 gases. Our commuting times would,  
7 like, would go up tenfold. Traffic on  
8 376 and 279 would greatly increase. I  
9 don't want to drive my car down here.  
10 Parking would go up phenomenally.

11 Without this, people  
12 would have to use cars more often or  
13 simply have to accept the fact that  
14 they would no longer be able to come  
15 downtown. Thank you.

16 MS. TAYLOR:

17 Hello, my name is Cameron  
18 Taylor, C-A-M-E-R-O-N T-A-Y-L-O-R.

19 I would like to draw  
20 attention to one of the many possible  
21 consequences of cutting buses, which is  
22 drunk driving. During 2023 in  
23 Pittsburgh, 28.4 percent of all traffic  
24 fatalities included one or more parties  
25 driving drunk, compared to the state

1 average of 25.4 percent. This number  
2 will only continue to increase once  
3 funding and services are cut.

4 Ubers are too expensive  
5 and are not optimal, and many people,  
6 especially university students, do not  
7 have cars. I'd like to leave you with  
8 this question. Would you rather see  
9 countless young people become lost,  
10 disoriented, injured, and possibly pass  
11 away from being forced to walk or drive  
12 home, or would you rather keep the  
13 routes as they are and keep public  
14 transit all accessible to get home  
15 safely? Thank you.

16 MR. MACNEIL:

17 Thank you.

18 MR. ELLSWORTH:

19 Hi. My name's Alex  
20 Ellsworth. That's A-L-E-X E-L-L-S-W-O-  
21 R-T-H.

22 Thousands of people  
23 across the City, including myself, will  
24 be heavily impacted by the proposed  
25 changes to I. I personally rely on

1 public transit on a daily basis. I use  
2 it to get to school every day and I  
3 also use it to get to work. And with  
4 the proposed changes, it would take me  
5 nearly double the amount of time to get  
6 there and cost double the price. For  
7 others, they may not be able to get to  
8 work at all.

9 There are only two bus  
10 lines in the entire city that will  
11 remain unaffected by this change.  
12 Every other line is either being  
13 reduced or eliminated. Something must  
14 be done. Thank you.

15 MR. FOWLER:

16 Good morning. My name is  
17 Robert Fowler, R-O-B-E-R-T F-O-W-L-E-R.

18 I understand that in the  
19 year 2026 that over 40 buses will be  
20 cut. While --- while that may be  
21 somewhat good, but at the same time it  
22 will cause way more problems than with  
23 this --- planet than there already is.  
24 There will be more cars with that,  
25 there will probably be more people that

1 has jobs that usually rely on Port  
2 authority and buses to get to work.  
3 But without their buses, they'll be  
4 either getting late or they'll not ---  
5 not be able to show up at all. And  
6 with that, they will either be getting  
7 fired or worse.

8 I understand that, but  
9 also there is many people in the world,  
10 many young people like myself, that  
11 doesn't get behind the wheel of a car  
12 because I don't trust myself behind the  
13 wheel just yet. I wanted to wait until  
14 I'm older, so I rely on transportation  
15 and the buses to get me to the place  
16 where I need to be.

17 I work at many --- many  
18 of the daycares I work to, I have to  
19 use the buses to get to the places.  
20 Three of those buses are going to be,  
21 in around 2026, will probably be shut  
22 down or eliminated, and that would mess  
23 up my work routine and I'll have to try  
24 to figure out and try to do more things  
25 as well.

1                   Also, each paycheck I'm  
2                   getting in from the daycares, they'll  
3                   probably be worsening up because I'll  
4                   probably be using money on Ubers. Each  
5                   paycheck will possibly be, it's just  
6                   going to be a chunk. The Ubers are  
7                   just going to be chunks of my paycheck.  
8                   And it will be - - - and if you're  
9                   basically using my paychecks for just  
10                  Ubers and for other things I have to  
11                  pay for. And with that, it's going to  
12                  become a more problem for me because I  
13                  might be able to get fired.

14                   I thank you for having me  
15                  today.

16                   MR. MACNEIL:

17                   Thank you.

18                   MR. MORRIS:

19                   Hello, my name is  
20                  Alexander Morris, A-L-E-X-A-N-D-E-R.  
21                  Morris, M-O-R-R-I-S, and I'm a student  
22                  at City Charter High School.

23                   And like many others in  
24                  Pittsburgh, I run public transportation  
25                  every single day to get to school, go

1 to work, or engage in other outside of  
2 school activities. And from what I  
3 understand, these proposed cuts to our  
4 transit system are largely due to a  
5 projected \$100 million deficit, but as  
6 I continued my research, I found  
7 something kind of confusing and  
8 concerning as well.

9 At the same time I is  
10 facing this crisis, parking rates  
11 downtown have gone up. Meter prices  
12 have also increased across the City,  
13 and now bus fare is expected to rise to  
14 \$3, making ours one of the most  
15 expensive bus fares in the county ---  
16 in the country and county.

17 All this means one thing  
18 to me, which is that people are being  
19 pushed out of public transit and more  
20 so into their cars where they'll have  
21 no trouble choice but to pay more.  
22 More for gas, more for parking, more  
23 just to live their lives in general.  
24 And while that may bring short term  
25 revenue, I have to ask, at what cost?

1 And how long will this go on before we  
2 see things return to normal, if they  
3 ever do?

4 Because the fact is that  
5 this situation isn't merely about  
6 budgets. It's also about people.  
7 Students, like myself, teachers that we  
8 have here, elderly riders, workers, et  
9 cetera. Lower incomes - - - lower income  
10 residents as well. People who don't  
11 have another option. People who feel  
12 like, you know, they're being left  
13 behind by decisions they have no vote  
14 in.

15 I'm not here just to  
16 raise concerns though. No, I am  
17 looking for alternatives. Can we look  
18 at perhaps contributions from large  
19 nonprofits or fair taxation on things  
20 such as vacant land or luxury  
21 developments? Can we also consider how  
22 to make the burden more equitable  
23 instead of putting it on those with the  
24 least, as we see with all of our bus  
25 riders here?



1                   Seeing as Mayor Gainey  
2           often mentions investing into the  
3           future, be that through plans or the  
4           younger generation, it would be  
5           contradictory to leave those people  
6           behind. So I ask you to not only  
7           consider the bottom line, but the lives  
8           behind the numbers. Thank you.

9                   CHASE:

10                  Morning. My name's  
11           Chase. I'm a senior at City High  
12           Charter School. I take the P76 to  
13           school every day. I graduate in June,  
14           but these transit cuts will hurt me.  
15           Hurt me and many other students and  
16           workers and local businesses. They  
17           could also limit access to schools like  
18           mine. And with Pittsburgh hosting the  
19           NFL draft next year, now is the worst  
20           time to cut transit. Thank you for  
21           your time.

22                  MR. MACNEIL:

23                  Thank you.

24                  MS. FOSSUM:

25                  My name Is Jude Fossum,

1 J-I-D-E F-O-S-S-I-M. And it would  
2 affect me and people in my family  
3 because we do take the P7 from - - - from  
4 work and school. And people in my  
5 community might not be able to afford  
6 other routes or be able to walk to  
7 other bus stops. And considering that  
8 route goes all through Wilkinsburg and  
9 through a bunch of communities that  
10 don't have alternative routes that are  
11 very readily available, it would take a  
12 lot more resources for them to be able  
13 to go in for farming (phonetic),  
14 especially by I. Thank you.

15 MS. WORSHAM:

16 Hello, my name is Tyeric  
17 Worsham, T-Y-E-R-I-C W-O-R-S-H-A-M.

18 I've heard that our  
19 public transit system will be cut in  
20 half by next year, and I have one  
21 question about that. What are we going  
22 to do now? Those without vehicles and  
23 that - - - and those who rely on buses  
24 will have a much more difficult time on  
25 getting to places where they need to

1 be, which could - - - which could make  
2 them lose their jobs. And, I'm sorry,  
3 people might not be able - - - those who  
4 are - - - those who go to school might  
5 not be able to even go to school or go  
6 to field trips and things like that.  
7 And that's all I have.

8 MR. TURNER:

9 All right.

10 My name's Tristan Turner,  
11 T-R-I-S-T-A-N T-I-R-N-E-R.

12 And I was just thinking  
13 about people who are mentally or  
14 physically disabled who literally can't  
15 drive a car. You can't pay for an  
16 Uber, you can't do things yourself. A  
17 lot of people heavily rely on the  
18 buses. Their only way to get from A to  
19 B, from work to school to wherever they  
20 have to go, to welfare places, to ship  
21 their packages, from mail, to go  
22 downtown to do stuff like that. And  
23 they literally have no choice. Like,  
24 if you're in their shoes and the City  
25 you live in, who's supposed to promise

1 and guarantee you this, like, way to  
2 get to places is cutting this line.  
3 You have literally no choice. You have  
4 nowhere to go, nowhere to. It's going  
5 to make it harder for them to live,  
6 things like that.

7 So, I just want to put  
8 that in perspective.

9 MR. MACNEIL:

10 Thank you.

11 MS. SALVADEO:

12 Hi, my name is Alicia  
13 Salvadeo, A-L-I-C-I-A S-A-L-V-A-D-E-O.

14 I am a teacher at City  
15 Charter High School. I've been a bus  
16 rider for 17 years, since I first moved  
17 to Pittsburgh. Use it every day to get  
18 to school, work, and now school again.  
19 Another reason why I think these bus  
20 cuts are dangerous in general is  
21 because I believe my son has the right  
22 to breathe clean air. And I think  
23 having more cars on the road is a step  
24 in the opposite direction.

25 Seventy (70) more reasons

1 are in this room. You've heard from a  
2 lot of our students talking about how  
3 they use this to get to school, to get  
4 to work. Some of them, like, I have to  
5 deal with them, like nodding off in  
6 class because they're working jobs  
7 until after 11 o' clock. How are they  
8 getting home, right? So this is not to  
9 say even anything about the bus drivers  
10 who would similarly lose their job.

11 So I think ultimately,  
12 right now, it's not an issue of there  
13 being no money for buses, but a  
14 question of priorities. And I think  
15 it's in everybody's best interest to  
16 prioritize sustainable public transit  
17 so that people could get to work and  
18 get to school.

19 Lastly, I'll just say, I  
20 think sometimes people put this as, you  
21 know, cities versus rural. And I can  
22 understand that, when people in rural  
23 communities need a lot as well. But  
24 who's buying the groceries, who's  
25 trying to pay their gas bills? Like,

1       this is all interconnected. And so, in  
2       order for people to be able to get by  
3       day-to-day, we need to be able to get  
4       to work. We need to be able to get the  
5       jobs based on the educations we get.

6                       So I thank you for the  
7       time you've made for me and my  
8       students.

9                       MR. MACNEIL:

10                      Thank you.

11                      MR. SINDLER:

12                      Hi, my name's Noah  
13       Sindler. I'm a senior at City High.  
14       I'm just going to keep it short and  
15       simple. I think that this is just sad.  
16       I think it's pathetic, in my opinion.

17                      You are taking away the  
18       opportunities of a lot of people to  
19       travel to one place to another, and  
20       that's not cool. You shouldn't be  
21       doing that. How can we trust you if  
22       you're not doing what is in people's  
23       best interest to get around to these  
24       places? We have the draft coming up,  
25       and if you're not going to be able to

1 bring all these buses, traffic is going  
2 to be a mess. It already is a mess.  
3 Better yet, also, where is the funding  
4 going if you are cutting these buses?  
5 Because it sure is not going to the  
6 homelessness problem and it isn't going  
7 to all the potholes. That's all I have  
8 to say. Thank you.

9 MR. DAVIS:

10 Hi, my name's Iklas  
11 Davis, I-K-L-A-S D-A-V-I-S.

12 One thing, I'm going to  
13 keep it short as well. But one thing  
14 that my --- my good friend Tristan  
15 Turner said was one thing about elderly  
16 people. It'll be harder for them to be  
17 able to get to place by place. And I  
18 know a lot of people, I know a lot of  
19 elderly people that have to take the  
20 bus to get to work or have to go get  
21 some medicine or do this kind of thing.  
22 And it's --- it's not helping by taking  
23 away one way to get them to place by  
24 place.

25 And one thing I will like

1 to say is that it get --- it takes ---  
2 I live in Duquesne. It takes me an  
3 hour to get to school and to get to  
4 home. Taking away some of the buses  
5 that help me get downtown to school or  
6 to work or other places, it will be a  
7 disadvantage for me and it will be  
8 harder for me to look for job --- a job  
9 anywhere. It will mess up a lot of  
10 opportunities for kids to go different  
11 places and see new things.

12 Taking away the P7 would  
13 be one of the hardest things because it  
14 help --- it helps people from  
15 McKeesport to get that downtown.  
16 Because I know a lot of people that  
17 live in McKeesport work in --- work  
18 downtown. Thank you.

19 MR. O'CONNOR:

20 Hi, my name is Hugh  
21 O'Connor, H-I-G-H O-C-O-N-N-O-R.

22 I'm here on behalf of my  
23 students, my school, my community. And  
24 I just wanted to, you know, emphasize  
25 some of the points that have already



1       been brought of today, the impact this  
2       will have on our school community.  
3       I've been working at the school for 17  
4       years at this point. I think that is  
5       an existential threat --- threat to our  
6       --- our school, actually.

7                       Also at a time when  
8       Pittsburgh Public is considering  
9       cutbacks in buildings and  
10      consolidation, I think, you know, a lot  
11      of these students also rely on buses in  
12      addition to ours. And I think that  
13      it's going to have a larger impact than  
14      a lot of us are necessarily realizing  
15      at this particular time. We talked  
16      about some of the social, the economic,  
17      and the political impacts as well.

18                      I also think at a time  
19      when we are basically coming out of  
20      this pandemic where a lot of people  
21      have moved to remote work, a lot of  
22      people are coming back into physical  
23      spaces, these office buildings. This  
24      is a terrible time to cut back these  
25      services. Congestion, as you've heard,

1 will go up. You actually have an  
2 environmental concern as well. You  
3 know, parking prices will. They are at  
4 a premium right now, and I'm sure those  
5 prices will rise as well.

6 And I just think that  
7 overall, I mean, the draft for a City  
8 who is, you know, revitalizing certain  
9 areas, like the area that we just  
10 walked past today. We want to bring  
11 people downtown. That's part of this  
12 idea of revitalizing this city. This  
13 is a crucial lifeline in order to do  
14 that. And cutting this back at this  
15 particular time is --- is going to be  
16 devastating in those zones. Thank you.

17 MR. MACNEIL:

18 Thank you.

19 MS. TURK:

20 Hello, my name is Kelly  
21 Turk, K-E-L-L-Y T-I-R-K, and I am a  
22 science teacher at City Charter High  
23 School. I can echo what all of my  
24 fellow students and teachers have said,  
25 but I also want to put this out there.

1 Our students are brilliant, and they  
2 have some really great ideas. So  
3 instead of saying this is the --- our  
4 proposal, what about opening it up to  
5 hey guys, we have this crisis, what can  
6 we do?

7 These kids think very  
8 differently than a grown adult. They  
9 have very great ideas, and they have  
10 said things in class, they've  
11 brainstormed, for example, hey, the T  
12 has been free from the North Shore to  
13 Gateway. What if we charge a quarter?  
14 What kind of revenue is that going to  
15 be? There are people that take that  
16 every single day, or \$0.50 cents. In  
17 the long run, you know, people don't  
18 think about a quarter or \$0.50 cents  
19 they might be picking up off the  
20 ground. You know, that seems like  
21 nothing, or pocket change.

22 What about, hey, we have  
23 some of these electric buses now? So  
24 how is that influencing the --- the  
25 long term goals of I? And then someone

1 else also brought up, you guys just  
2 changed your name to I. What was the  
3 cost of that? So that's almost a  
4 million dollars just in the name  
5 change. Why was that necessary?

6 So, I'll leave you with  
7 that. But these kids are brilliant,  
8 and maybe you should think of some of  
9 their ideas.

10 MR. MACNEIL:

11 Thank you.

12 MS. HARRIS:

13 Hello, my name is Veshae  
14 Harris, V-E-S-H-A-E H-A-R-R-I-S.

15 And I just want to come  
16 up here and say, there are so many  
17 younger kids and students that are,  
18 like, less fortunate and don't have it.  
19 And I live in, like, a less fortunate  
20 area, which is the west side, Sheridan.  
21 There's, like, a lot of younger kids  
22 who can even barely afford to get on I.

23 And I have, like, younger siblings and  
24 stuff who are growing up and who will  
25 be going to high school and who will be

1       wanting to do stuff with their friends  
2       and stuff. And my mom is not going to  
3       --- my mom works a job too, so she  
4       won't be able to take, like, my brother  
5       and sister to work and everywhere they  
6       need to go.

7                       Also, I work a part time  
8       job. I'm 18 years old. I have other  
9       stuff besides, you know, like getting a  
10      car, which is going to be a big  
11      priority, like, coming up. But you  
12      know, it's not a lot of students who  
13      even can get on I to get to a job to  
14      save up for a car or it's not like a  
15      lot of students who even have the money  
16      to start saving up. Some people have  
17      to help their parents pay with --- pay  
18      for bills, help younger siblings.  
19      There's a lot of us who are, like, a  
20      second mom to our siblings, so we also  
21      have other responsibilities.

22                      A lot of jobs aren't  
23      paying that much, even for just part  
24      time and high schoolers who need to get  
25      to where they're going. And, you know,

1       that's really it. Thank you.

2                   MS. SILBERMANN:

3               I'm just going to make a  
4       quick announcement, if I could,  
5       everyone. Good morning. Thank you all  
6       for coming. If you are not in a giant  
7       rush to get back to a class or  
8       something, we have a bit of a lull in  
9       the main room, and we would love it if  
10      you could testify in front of our CEO  
11      and our Board members who are up on the  
12      main stage there. If you have to rush  
13      back to something, by all means, please  
14      feel free to stay here and give your  
15      testimony here. But we just wanted to  
16      let you know that this room is very  
17      full and that room is very not.

18              So if you'd like to  
19      speak, or even if you want to maybe  
20      split in half and two groups go in two  
21      different places so that we can keep  
22      everybody talking. Please feel free.

23                   MR. MACNEIL:

24              I'll say before you ---  
25      before you do, I don't know if you have

1 any more, but with this room, we don't  
2 have one on our media. I'd like to  
3 actually get a picture of this too, if  
4 we can.

5 MS. WELCH:

6 Can I ask a quick  
7 question? If we've already spoken, can  
8 we speak again?

9 MS. SILBERMANN:

10 I --- I --- that is not a  
11 question that I know the answer to, and  
12 I'm not sure if they'll let you.

13 MS. WELCH:

14 We also have multiple  
15 groups coming. We have multiple groups  
16 coming. We have another group at 11:00  
17 and one this --- this afternoon.

18 MS. SILBERMANN:

19 So I would ask the main  
20 desk that question.

21 MS. WELCH:

22 Okay.

23 MS. SILBERMANN:

24 But yes, we would love it  
25 if we had a full group of speakers in

1 both rooms. But the --- some of our  
2 Board members are in the other room,  
3 and we would really like them to hear  
4 your voices too, so.

5 MS. WELCH:

6 Thank you.

7 MS. SILBERMANN:

8 Yeah, thank you. So I  
9 --- I will mention really quickly, we  
10 do have our 10:05 and 10:10 speaker are  
11 in the other room giving testimony  
12 right now. We might have a gap after  
13 that. So I would say if you want to go  
14 to the other room, you can. You just  
15 might be waiting until there's a lull.  
16 So if some of you want to continue to  
17 give testimony here, I think that's a  
18 good idea. But then if some of you  
19 also want to go into the main hearing  
20 room and sort of wait to see if anyone  
21 doesn't show up for their speaking  
22 time.

23 But I will leave that up  
24 to your group.

25 MS. WELCH:



1                   Okay.

2                   Yeah, we were finishing  
3 up here, but we - - - .

4                   MS. SILBERMANN:

5                   Okay.

6                   MS. WELCH:

7                   We have a little bit of  
8 time.

9                   MS. SILBERMANN:

10                  Yeah.

11                  MS. WELCH:

12                  Flexibility.

13                                 - - -

14                  (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
15 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

16                                 - - -

17                  MS. REIHING:

18                  I was really grateful to  
19 hear all those people over there too.  
20 First of all, I want to note that I  
21 take the 36 which is the bus which was  
22 Jerome Bettis's number. So it's like  
23 that's the bus. So you can't get rid  
24 of that. That's his number, right? So  
25 I called him the bus, too.

1                   And that's one of the  
2                   ones that's slated to be eliminated.  
3                   Which for me, it's not a question to go  
4                   to work. It's just, it's going to  
5                   Heinz Hall, it's going downtown, it's  
6                   going to the Aviary and Phipps and  
7                   doing fun things. But for other  
8                   people, it's crucial. It's work. It's  
9                   people who work.

10                   And these --- these cuts  
11                   are draconian. I mean, it's like  
12                   really so severe that you're going to  
13                   just cut people off. I always tell my  
14                   sisters, I want to be a --- I want to  
15                   be a grape. I don't want to be a  
16                   raisin. And you know, if you're a  
17                   raisin, you're just drying up in your  
18                   house. If you're a grape, then you can  
19                   go out and take Port Authority. And I  
20                   also do ACCESS, which is a wonderful,  
21                   wonderful service. And I understand  
22                   that that could be cut back too.

23                   It's --- it's affecting  
24                   and marginalizing elderly people,  
25                   people of color, low income people.

1 You know, that segment of society is  
2 going to be so hurt by these cuts. And  
3 it's really sad. And I understand  
4 budget stuff, you know.

5 But I want to know too,  
6 on our end, on the people's end, what  
7 can we do? That's my big thing. I  
8 mean, you have to call your  
9 congressperson. I realize it's state  
10 funding. That's the big hold up, too.  
11 Am I correct in that? That it's state  
12 funding? That we have to loosen the  
13 coffers up there too, you know. But I  
14 just --- it's --- they're draconian. I  
15 mean, it's just they're totally  
16 eliminating people from being able to  
17 go out and --- and especially being  
18 elderly, you know, where it's --- it's  
19 that that's what keeps you alive is  
20 going to music and concerts and sports  
21 and stuff, stuff like that too. And  
22 taking that away, it's going to be.

23 I wanted to subscribe to  
24 the symphony for next year, and it's  
25 like, I can't do it if I can't get

1       there, you know? And I know I've used  
2       the pass to go downtown, and it's a \$30  
3       cab ride. I can't afford that. You  
4       know, if I have to go to a concert, I  
5       can't afford \$60 in each direction. I  
6       love my pass, you know. I've waited 65  
7       years to get the pass, and I certainly  
8       use it too.

9                       So, I thank you for  
10       listening too. And I wish all of you  
11       the best of luck too. This is a  
12       lifeline for everybody, too. And I  
13       hope that something happens too, so.  
14       Thank you so much. And, okay.

15                      MR. MACNEIL:

16                      Thank you.

17                      MS. REIHING:

18                      I appreciate it. Thank  
19       you.

20                      - - -

21       (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
22       THE PROCEEDINGS.)

23                      - - -

24                      MR. PHILLIPS:

25                      Okay.

1 Mr. Donald Russell.

2 MR. RUSSELL:

3 Thank you.

4 MR. PHILLIPS:

5 Thank you.

6 MR. RUSSELL:

7 Yes. There is definitely  
8 a problem --- problem here. I'm in  
9 mental health recovery. The thing is,  
10 if I don't have bus service, I cannot  
11 see --- see my therapist. I could not  
12 see my psych nurse, and --- and I will  
13 not be able to get my meds. Because of  
14 bus cuts. If I don't take my meds, I'm  
15 going to be very manic again. And,  
16 excuse me. So --- so cutting this  
17 service would basically put --- put me  
18 in jeopardy because I will not be able  
19 to see my outpatient treatment team,  
20 and I will not be --- be able to pick  
21 up my meds if bus services are --- are  
22 cut.

23 Also, I --- I live in a  
24 high --- high rise and there's a bunch  
25 of elderly folks who forgot to pay the

1 light bill. Budget cut affected the  
2 light bill. Yeah, I --- in a high rise  
3 and there's a lot of elderly folks who  
4 have walkers and who have canes and ---  
5 and also need to go to other doctors  
6 too.

7 And it's like I --- I  
8 said, if the service is cut, we're  
9 going to be up crick. Because they're  
10 talking about major reduction of buses.  
11 And that's important in a bind,  
12 especially if --- if they're taking the  
13 ACCESS because there's also people that  
14 depend on ACCESS where I'm at.

15 So --- so like I said,  
16 this is going to make a mess out of  
17 things. So --- so, yay, one minute  
18 left. But --- but it's like I'm  
19 saying, I'm doing buses that they're  
20 planning --- is the 91 and the Brighton  
21 bus I took home from work yesterday.  
22 Both buses were packed with people. So  
23 it's like I said, if this service is  
24 cut, there doesn't be big --- big ---  
25 there's going to be a lot of problems

1       for us who depend on buses. So, that's  
2       it. Like I said, I am required to see  
3       people too, so --- so I won't be able  
4       to make it to do outpatient  
5       appointments and pick up my medication  
6       if the services are cut. Yeah. Okay.

7               Thank you for ---.

8               MR. MACNEIL:

9               Thank you.

10              MR. RUSSELL:

11              For --- for letting me  
12       go.

13              ---

14       (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
15       THE PROCEEDINGS.)

16              ---

17              MR. PHILLIPS:

18              All right.

19              We'll call up Aileen  
20       Zurienski.

21              MS. ZURIENSKI:

22              Hello, my name is Aileen  
23       Zurienski. I live in Oakland, and I  
24       take the 93 to Square Hill because  
25       there's a clubhouse there for people

1       having mental illness, and I like that  
2       route.

3                   A friend of mine keeps  
4       telling me that they're going to get  
5       rid of it, and that scares the heck out  
6       of me and I want - - - I'd rather not  
7       have to switch buses just to get there.  
8       It's kind of like - - - I have another  
9       bunch of friends that live in Squirrel  
10      Hill that take it to people's Oakland.  
11      So I'm talking on behalf half of them,  
12      too.

13                   I don't think it's fair  
14      to do that, but so far, I haven't seen  
15      anything happen. Knock on whatever. I  
16      was sitting in the other room with my  
17      friend Kelda. I was like, I didn't  
18      want to sign up first. And I go, wait  
19      a minute. People talking about buses.  
20      I better speak up. Because I take the  
21      bus all the time. I take it. I take  
22      whatever bus in Oakland goes to  
23      downtown to do stuff. But my main  
24      concern is the 93. Because I really  
25      like that bus route. Because it goes



1 from there, and it goes into Greenfield  
2 and then to Square Hill. It might seem  
3 like it's taking a long time, but it's  
4 a good bus route.

5 So I just wanted to put  
6 my word in.

7 MR. PHILLIPS:

8 Thank you. Thank you  
9 very much. We appreciate it. All  
10 right. Next up is Shawn Pastor.

11 MR. PASTOR:

12 Hey, how's everybody  
13 doing today?

14 MR. PHILLIPS:

15 Good. How are you?

16 MR. PASTOR:

17 Not bad, but, yeah. You  
18 guys, I don't know what I wrote on or  
19 what what the heck's going on here,  
20 because this is --- this is --- this is  
21 pretty. This --- this came on me, and  
22 I'm --- I'm devastated. You're trying  
23 to cut the --- trying to dismantle and  
24 get rid of 36, 38, and 41? I --- I  
25 can't do that. Because I use all

1 three. I use all three buses. Not all  
2 the time, but I use them.

3 And the people they use  
4 the 36 that I talk to, they're  
5 devastated. They're not in a good ---  
6 they're not in a good state. They're  
7 --- they're upset. It's just, it hurts  
8 because I've known this agency for over  
9 20, like, 25 years. It's, I'm sorry.  
10 I am getting a little emotional, but it  
11 just sucks.

12 Don't do this. Don't do  
13 this. Please, don't do this. Oh, God.  
14 But I --- I just, I don't know. Like,  
15 it's just, please don't. Please don't  
16 do this. So, thanks.

17 MR. MACNEIL:

18 Thank you.

19 MR. PHILLIPS:

20 Thank you.

21 MR. MACNEIL:

22 And Shawn, right behind  
23 the desk where you signed in to speak?

24 MR. PASTOR:

25 Yeah.

1                   MR. MACNEIL:

2                   The main room is behind  
3                   there where there's other public  
4                   comment going on right now, too. This  
5                   was considered the overflow, so if you  
6                   want to attend that in there, you're  
7                   welcome to.

8                   MR. PASTOR:

9                   Okay.

10                  Thanks, guys. Appreciate  
11                  it.

12                  MR. MACNEIL:

13                  Thank you.

14                  MR. PASTOR:

15                  Yep.

16                  MR. PHILLIPS:

17                  Thanks.

18                                 - - -

19                  (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
20                  THE PROCEEDINGS.)

21                                 - - -

22                  MR. MACNEIL:

23                  It is now 1:00 p.m. As  
24                  publicly advertised, we will now take a  
25                  break and go off the record from 1:00

1 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The public hearing  
2 will resume at 3:00 p.m. Thank you.

3 \* \* \* \* \*

4 MEETING CONCLUDED AT 12:54 P.M.

5 \* \* \* \* \*

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## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.  
Dated the 13th day of May, 2025



Benjamin Morrow,  
Court Reporter

# Public Hearing 1

**Date: 4/29/2025**

**Location: Convention Center**

**Room: Auxiliary**

**Time: Afternoon**

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

PUBLIC MEETING

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED  
SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND FARE INCREASE

PUBLIC HEARING

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: KATHARINE KELLEMAN, CEO  
Tom Burgunder, Member  
Senator Lindsey Williams,  
Member  
Charles Reece, Member  
Donminika Brown, Member  
Don Rivetti, Member  
Jim Ritchie, Member  
Inez Colon, Member  
Amy Silbermann, Member  
Mike Cetra, Member

Reporter: Benjamin Morrow

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1 HEARING: Tuesday, April 29, 2025

2 3:04 p.m.

3 LOCATION: David L. Lawrence

4 Convention Center

5 1000 Fort Duquesne

6 Boulevard

7 Pittsburgh, PA 15222

8 WITNESSES: Fawn Montgomery, John Cotter

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## A P P E A R A N C E S

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## I N D E X

## TESTIMONY

By Fawn Montgomery 62 - 66

DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES 66 - 67

## TESTIMONY

By John Cotter 68 - 70

CERTIFICATE 71

## E X H I B I T S

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|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
|               | NONE OFFERED       |                         |

## P R O C E E D I N G S

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JAMES McNEAL:

All right, good afternoon. It is now 3:00 p.m. The public hearing will resume. As a reminder, this hearing is being recorded and transcribed by a court reporter, so if you do not want to be recorded, please exit the hearing room now.

Each speaker has up to three minutes to provide public comment and should come up to the speaker's table when called upon and state their name clearly and spell it for the court reporter before beginning to provide your public comment.

NANCY BARYLAK:

I'd like to call Fawn Montgomery. Good afternoon.

MS. MONTGOMERY:

So my name is Fawn Montgomery. I am the CEO for Take Action Advocacy Group. I'm also a

1 Board member of the Pittsburgh Regional  
2 Public Transit.

3 So coming here today to  
4 provide public comment on the proposed  
5 ---. Specifically I want to highlight  
6 the Mon Valley areas.

7 First of all, I like this  
8 document and the way you are laying it  
9 out. So I do understand that the state  
10 said this is what they're giving you  
11 all and then you all had to make these  
12 decisions, these cuts. I get that as a  
13 former elected official.

14 My issue has always been  
15 why does it have to affect the people,  
16 like take away from us? The increases  
17 in the fares, I don't see anything over  
18 like a \$40 increase, but that is a lot  
19 to folks and you're talking about \$2.75  
20 to \$3, 31 day pass for 97 --- will  
21 possibly go from \$97 to \$106.50.

22 And then some of these  
23 cuts like the McKeesport flyer talking  
24 about eliminating it all together. It  
25 is hard enough in the Mon Valley

1       because we're outside of the bigger  
2       City of Pittsburgh.

3               So it's hard enough to  
4       get in here. It's hard enough to  
5       maintain employment because your boss  
6       doesn't care if the bus is late or if  
7       the bus didn't show up or was five or  
8       ten minutes behind. It's hard enough  
9       to get our kids to, you know, doctor's  
10      appointments or get our own sons of  
11      doctor's appointments.

12              It's hard enough just to  
13      get out of - - - maybe you just want to  
14      go to the park. Maybe you just want to  
15      go to the fair or something. It's hard  
16      enough to do that right now like today.

17              So if some of these cuts  
18      go through, it's going to be  
19      detrimental to areas like McKeesport,  
20      like the Mon Valley, like anything  
21      outside of the bigger city. Not that  
22      it won't be detrimental for the people  
23      here, because it will. But you're  
24      talking about outside of the city where  
25      already transportation barriers just to

1 do regular things. Go to the doctors,  
2 go to the grocery store, not to mention  
3 the food - - - that already exists in the  
4 Mon Valley because we have areas that  
5 don't have any grocery stores.

6 So if these cuts go  
7 through, it's going to make our quality  
8 of life worse than it already is  
9 presently. So we're having all these  
10 public hearings. I think you all know  
11 that we're not in favor of these cuts.  
12 What is the plan here? Like what is  
13 the plan - - - if you have to do these  
14 cuts, what is the plan for the people  
15 that you are supposed to serve? Like  
16 what is the plan for some of those  
17 things? If you're going to eliminate,  
18 are you bringing back anything? If  
19 you're going to eliminate, are you  
20 going to go through some of these price  
21 increases?

22 Because I know there was  
23 an issue with ridership and it's not  
24 that people don't want to ride the bus.  
25 They can't afford to ride the bus and

1 then they can't even get to the bus  
2 stop because the cuts will be coming.

3 So if I live on the top  
4 of the hill in McKeesport, I can't get  
5 to the bottom. I can walk, but I could  
6 --- there's safety concerns depending  
7 on what, you know, part of the hill you  
8 got to walk down.

9 So what is y'all's plan?  
10 Cause there has to be some kind of a  
11 plan.

12 NANCY BARYLAK:

13 Sorry.

14 MS. MONTGOMERY:

15 No, I get it.

16 NANCY BARYLAK:

17 That was a little loud.

18 Sorry.

19 JAMES McNEAL:

20 Thank you. During the  
21 public comment, I don't know if you  
22 were here for the morning when we read  
23 through everything.

24 MS. MONTGOMERY:

25 No.



1                   JAMES McNEAL:

2                   We do not respond and  
3                   answer questions.

4                   MS. MONTGOMERY:

5                   Okay.

6                   JAMES McNEAL:

7                   But there is some tabling  
8                   out front where you sign in.

9                   MS. MONTGOMERY:

10                  Okay.

11                  JAMES McNEAL:

12                  And some of the questions  
13                  can be answered there.

14                  MS. MONTGOMERY:

15                  Okay.

16                  JAMES McNEAL:

17                  And then outside of this  
18                  when you're done, also the other room  
19                  right behind the table is the main  
20                  room. This is the auxiliary for a fill  
21                  in. You're more than welcome to go  
22                  into the main room and hear more public  
23                  comment also.

24                  MS. MONTGOMERY:

25                  Okay.

1                   NANCY BARYLAK:

2                   Thank you.

3                   John Cotter.

4                   MR. COTTER:

5                   My name is John Cotter.

6                   That's J-O-H-N, C-O-T-T-E-R.

7                   I've come here just  
8                   generally to show support for like you  
9                   know, anyone at the state level who  
10                  looks at this to you know, increase  
11                  funding for transit, whatever you have  
12                  to do for that so we don't have these  
13                  cuts to begin with.

14                  You know, worst comes to  
15                  worst if there are cuts, you know, I'm  
16                  from Brookline and it's like all the  
17                  buses from Brookline would be cut with  
18                  this from what I'm aware of. Like 39,  
19                  41, pretty much all the ---. And  
20                  there's over 13,000 people there. So  
21                  for me it seems absurd that we wouldn't  
22                  have bus access. Especially because a  
23                  lot of people I know had moved there  
24                  because it's a pretty quick bus ride,  
25                  15 minutes when the tunnel is actually

1 open, but now Washington.

2 Now, even if there was  
3 something worst comes to worse that  
4 there's at least some bus access there,  
5 even if it's just a 39, I just want to  
6 say that's really important.

7 I also want to comment on  
8 something unrelated, but when you think  
9 about increasing ridership, you know,  
10 to these areas, you know, the self  
11 busway at the entrance of the  
12 neighborhood, but it's not very  
13 accessible. It's like Whitehead  
14 Station, Whitehead Street itself. No  
15 sidewalks. Jacob Street, no sidewalks.  
16 Most at Dunster to the - - - Station. No  
17 sidewalks. I used to take that to West  
18 Mifflin sometimes, but you kind of got  
19 to dodge cars in the morning. It's  
20 like Cadet Avenue to the Pioneer  
21 Station. You know there's housing  
22 there, but you know, no sidewalks.

23 I know that's not  
24 entirely your control. There's  
25 different property owners, but if PRT

1 could work with whoever they need to to  
2 try to increase, you know, sidewalk  
3 accessibility. I think that could help  
4 with ridership as well.

5 But again, showing my  
6 support for funding in general, but  
7 also just making sure Brookline has  
8 something. And that's about all I need  
9 to say.

10 JAMES McNEAL:

11 Thank you. In the  
12 morning period for public comment, I  
13 think there was some individuals that  
14 were able to speak in the other room  
15 too. So if someone doesn't show and  
16 you'd like to in the main room, by all  
17 means, please go into there and hear  
18 some of the other comments. Thank you.

19 NANCY BARYLAK:

20 Thank you.

21 \* \* \* \* \*

22 MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6:54 P.M.

23 \* \* \* \* \*

## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.  
Dated the 13 day of May, 2025

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Benjamin Morrow", is written over a horizontal line.

Benjamin Morrow,  
Court Reporter

# Public Hearing 2

**Date: 5/6/2025**

**Location: Soldiers and Sailors**

**Room: Main**

**Time: Morning**

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED SERVICE  
REDUCTIONS AND FARE INCREASE

PUBLIC MEETING

BEFORE: Jeffrey Devlin, Member  
Tom Burgunder, Member  
Senator Lindsey Williams,  
Member  
Charles Reeves, Member  
Amy Silbermann, Member  
Donminika Brown, Member  
Don Rivetti, Member  
Jim Ritchie, Member  
Inez Colon, Member

HEARING: Tuesday, May 6, 2025  
9:00 a.m.

LOCATION: Soldiers & Sailors Memorial  
Museum

4141 Fifth Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Reporter: Chelsea Curry

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by the certifying agency.

1 WITNESSES: JoEllen Habas, Sabrina Arnold,  
2 Rosemary Wang, Perri Smith, Madison  
3 Coulter, Tameara Robinson, Lanya Hill,  
4 Taijoura Hopkins, Brayden Cannon, Carolyn  
5 Kerr, Richard Walter, Erin Morgan, Juanita  
6 Knight, Arianna Aguilar, Sean Green, Ryan  
7 Matthews, Cheryl Longstreet, Thea Gamboa,  
8 Aneesa Fulton, Kristen Abdulah, Gale  
9 Albright, Tom Ogden, Daniel Rojas, Wayne  
10 Reno, Eric Cox, Tatiana Grinberg-Limoncic,  
11 Sarah Siplak, Cassandra Masters, Anna  
12 Maria Fato, Shawn Pastor, Karen Smith,  
13 Renee Wright

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Benjamin Nicklow, Moderator

Emily Gwash, ACCESS

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Description

Offered

NONE OFFERED

## P R O C E E D I N G S

MODERATOR:

Before we begin to receive public comment, our hearing moderator, Benjamin Nicklow will go over some housekeeping information, so I'm going to turn it over to Ben.

MR. NICKLOW:

Good morning. This hearing is being recorded and transcribed by a court reporter. If you do not want to be recorded, please exit the hearing room at this time. Please note that we have American Sign Language and Spanish language interpreters to provide translation services during the hearing upon request.

For participants who registered to provide public comment at today's hearing, you will be called to speak at your designated time. You may be called as much as 15 minutes early to speak if there are no other speakers scheduled.

1                   For participants who did not  
2 pre register, you have been placed in an  
3 open time slot to speak and will be called  
4 upon to speak at your designated time,  
5 though you may also be called as much as  
6 15 minutes early to speak if there are no  
7 other speakers scheduled.

8                   Each speaker will have three  
9 minutes to provide their public comment.  
10 When called upon, please clearly state  
11 your name, spell it, and then please  
12 clearly speak. Your hearing moderator  
13 will alert you when you have one minute  
14 remaining.

15                   If you have --- if your three  
16 minutes is up and you want to provide  
17 further comment, you may do so via  
18 telephone, regular mail, or online until  
19 5:00 p.m. on --- 5:00 p.m. Eastern  
20 Standard Time on Wednesday, June 18th,  
21 2025.

22                   Additional details on these  
23 other methods to submit public comment to  
24 PRT regarding the proposed funding crisis  
25 related to fiscal year 2026 fare increases

1 and service reductions is available on  
2 PRT's website at [www.rodprt.org/funding-](http://www.rodprt.org/funding-crisis)  
3 [crisis](http://www.rodprt.org/funding-crisis).

4                   Speakers cannot donate or  
5 delegate their allotted time to another  
6 individual if interested in speaking, but  
7 speakers may read in written comments they  
8 have brought in with them on behalf of  
9 another individual during their scheduled  
10 time.

11                   The proposed of this public  
12 hearing for this PRT to receive public  
13 comment only, participating PRT board  
14 members and/or staff members will not  
15 respond to public comment provided during  
16 this hearing, but all comments will be  
17 recorded and analyzed as part of the  
18 public comment collection process.

19                   Additionally, there is an  
20 information table set up outside the  
21 hearing room where PRT staff can answer  
22 questions. Both PRT board members and  
23 senior management will be listening to  
24 public comment during this public hearing.

25



1                   At this time, I would ask PRT  
2 board members who are in attendance to  
3 identify themselves.

4                   MS. GWASH:

5                   Emily Gwash, representing  
6 Access

7                   MR. NICKLOW:

8                   I would now ask PRT senior  
9 management who are in attendance to  
10 identify themselves.

11                  MR. RITCHIE:

12                  Jim Ritchie, I'm the Chief  
13 Communications Officer for PRT.

14                  MR. DEVLIN:

15                  Jeffrey Devlin, Chief  
16 Innovation Officer of PRT.

17                  MR. CETRA:

18                  Again, I'm Michael Cetra,  
19 Chief Legal Officer for PRT.

20                  MS. SILBERMANN:

21                  Amy Silbermann, Chief  
22 Development Officer, PRT.

23                  MS. COLON:

24                  Inez Colon, Chief Human  
25 Resources Officer, Pittsburgh Regional

1 Transit.

2 MR. RIVETTI:

3 Don Rivetti, Chief  
4 Maintenance Officer, PRT.

5 MR. NICKLOW:

6 Thank you.

7 This public hearing is  
8 scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and  
9 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a two hour  
10 break from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. PRT  
11 intends to conduct a public hearing for  
12 the entire advertised time period to  
13 ensure members of the public who did not  
14 pre register but appear today and sign up  
15 to speak have the opportunity to do so.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER:

17 Thank you, Ben.

18 Absent additional state  
19 funding, PRT is facing an operating budget  
20 deficit of approximately \$100 million for  
21 its fiscal year 2026 beginning July 1st of  
22 this year. PRT is required by law to pass  
23 a balanced budget and with so many fixed  
24 cost are proposing a 35 percent reduction  
25 in bus, light rail and incline services.

1 If approved by PRT's Board, these changes  
2 would begin with PRT's February 2026  
3 service adjustments along with a 25 cent  
4 fare increase and related increases to  
5 other PRT fare products.

6 Additionally, due to the  
7 severity of the budget deficit,  
8 corresponding reductions to service levels  
9 and increases in fares are also being  
10 proposed for PRT's sponsored paratransit  
11 program ACCESS. This program provides  
12 demand response transportation services  
13 for eligible individuals with disabilities  
14 and senior citizens in Allegheny County.

15 A summary of the proposed  
16 funding crisis related FY2026 fare  
17 increases and service reductions is  
18 available on PRT's website at  
19 [ridePRT.org/funding-crisis](http://ridePRT.org/funding-crisis). There's also  
20 information at the informational tables  
21 outside the hearing room with this  
22 information.

23 We will now begin to receive  
24 public comment.

25 MR. NICKLOW:

1                   We will start with JoEllen  
2 Habas. As a reminder, please state your  
3 name and spell it before beginning your  
4 comment. You will have three minutes with  
5 a warning of one minute remaining.

6                   MS. HABAS:

7                   Thank you. My name is  
8 JoEllen Habas, J-O-E-L-L-E-N, H-A, B like  
9 boy, A, S like Sam.

10                  First of all, I'd like to  
11 thank you for your service. As a senior  
12 citizen who is unable to drive for health  
13 reasons, my whole life has been changed by  
14 having access to the transportation  
15 throughout the City of Pittsburgh and I'm  
16 very grateful for that.

17                  I have a sister who lives in  
18 Mount Lebanon. I go to see her, she comes  
19 to see me, we go to the movies, we go out  
20 to dinner and that's all facilitated  
21 through the buses back and forth. I fear  
22 that if the bus service specifically in  
23 Mount Lebanon, but also the other proposed  
24 cuts, I fear that if that's eliminated her  
25 life will be impacted in so many ways.

1 She may be turned into a shut in.

2 She goes to her doctor's  
3 appointments, her dentist appointments by  
4 bus. Sure, through her insurance, she has  
5 access to transportation at times, but she  
6 needs to get out of the house. She needs  
7 to be able to function as an adult and as  
8 an independent person and not be picked up  
9 and dropped off. She might not be happy  
10 to hear me say that, but it's important to  
11 her. It's important for her  
12 socialization. It's important when she  
13 has trouble with her phone that she goes  
14 to get it checked out.

15 She does grocery shopping,  
16 she goes to the pharmacy. Her friends and  
17 her family are not all in that immediate  
18 area. And I'm afraid that her life will  
19 be and her mental status and her physical  
20 well being will be impacted. And it's not  
21 just her, of course, it's all the other  
22 people who have similar situations.

23 I also, in riding the bus  
24 back and forth to see her, see so many  
25 people in the outlying areas who come into

1 Pittsburgh to Downtown to work. Their  
2 livelihood is dependent upon that.

3 MR. NICKLOW:

4 One minute remaining.

5 MS. HABAS:

6 Thank you.

7 And a lot of them don't make  
8 a huge amount of money to be unable to  
9 take the bus back and forth. Especially  
10 if their shifts are impacted at later  
11 times and have multiple changes in their  
12 bus schedule. Their lives will be changed  
13 in a meaningful and very, very sad way.

14 So thank you for having this  
15 hearing and I appreciate the ability to  
16 communicate with you. Thank you.

17 MR. NICKLOW:

18 Thank you very much.

19 Sabrina Arnold. Harry Smith. Madison  
20 Wong. Okay. It looks like we have a few  
21 more people that came in. We'll go back.  
22 Sabrina Arnold. Sabrina, when you come  
23 down, please state your name, spell it.  
24 You will have three minutes with a warning  
25 for one minute remaining.

1                   MS. ARNOLD:

2                   Okay.

3                   My name is Sabrina Arnold.

4   S-A-B-R-I-N-A, A-R-N-O-L-D. My ZIP code  
5   is 15222. I can start? Okay.

6                   Hello, my name is Sabrina  
7   Arnold. I am a junior that attends City  
8   Charter High School located in Downtown  
9   Pittsburgh. I've been given the  
10   opportunity to voice my opinion, thoughts  
11   and feelings on the Pittsburgh Regional  
12   Transit plan budget cut.

13                  Thankfully, I am blessed to  
14   have the ability to ride the bus and have  
15   the freedom to leave and go where I want  
16   to go. If these budget cuts go through, I  
17   will no longer be able to have the ability  
18   to go to work or school or participate in  
19   athletics.

20                  My parents are divorced and I  
21   live in two separate parts of town. My  
22   mom lives on the east and my father lives  
23   in North Hills. My parents don't always  
24   have the time or the ability to take me  
25   across the cities. So a lot of times I

1 ride the bus between my two homes.

2 I mainly stay with my mother  
3 in Lincoln-Lemington, where there are only  
4 two buses that come to my house, the 82  
5 and the P17. Unfortunately, my mother  
6 works a lot so it's often impossible to  
7 get around without the buses.

8 I also take the bus four days  
9 a week to go to my school and back home.  
10 If the budget cuts are cut, I will no  
11 longer have the ability to go to City  
12 High, including that it's a charter school  
13 where I have been attending for the last  
14 three years because the only two buses  
15 that come to my house will no longer be  
16 there.

17 As a year round student  
18 athlete, at home --- at school and home, I  
19 also attend a City Charter High School.  
20 I also no longer have the ability to play  
21 sports that I love. I play volleyball,  
22 soccer, cheer and basketball and track.  
23 Sports that are all year round. My mother  
24 isn't always able to take me and pick me  
25 up from the sports I play, so I often ride



1 the bus home.

2 When you've been playing a  
3 sport that you love and you pour your  
4 whole life into it, your time, your body,  
5 your mind, when you're no longer being  
6 able to play it, it's like a part of you  
7 is gone too. I wouldn't want that to  
8 happen to me.

9 Since I'm captain, it gives  
10 me a feeling of determination, resilience  
11 and the feeling of responsibility.

12 In addition, I work at CVS  
13 located in Oakland from 4:00 to 11:00 p.m.  
14 when I can. And if the budget cuts are  
15 made, I will no longer be able to work  
16 because it said that if y'all cut it,  
17 buses will run no later than 11:00 p.m.  
18 so I will have no ability to get home.

19 MR. NICKLOW:

20 One minute remaining.

21 MS. ARNOLD:

22 My work is important to me.  
23 It helps me save up for things like a car  
24 and daily month expenses. I feel like my  
25 freedom and my ability to be independent

1 is being taken away.

2 With that being said, I'm not  
3 the only teen who will be negatively  
4 impacted by the transit budget cuts. But  
5 mine is just one of the stories and  
6 there's a bunch more who have not even  
7 shared theirs. I hope that you will take  
8 my situation into consideration before  
9 making the huge life changing decision.  
10 I appreciate you for giving me the time to  
11 speak.

12 MODERATOR:

13 Thank you, Sabrina.

14 MR. NICKLOW:

15 Madison Wong.

16 Please state your name and  
17 spell it. You will have three minutes  
18 with a one minute warning.

19 MS. WANG:

20 My name is Rosemary Wang.  
21 R-O-S-E-M-A-R-Y, W-A-N-G. My ZIP code is  
22 15204. I live in Sheridan where there's  
23 only one bus that's close to me.

24 I take the 26 every day to  
25 get to my high school, City Charter,

1 that's Downtown. If my bus got  
2 eliminated, I wouldn't have any way to get  
3 there. I would have to either add on a  
4 20 or more minute walk through hills to  
5 buses that might not even be available to  
6 me after the major reductions, or I would  
7 have to find a new school while I'm in my  
8 senior year.

9 I've made strong connections  
10 with many peers and teachers who also rely  
11 on the buses to get to school. I know so  
12 many of my classmates take the 39. One of  
13 my closest friends take the 41. All of  
14 these people would face similar problems  
15 if their buses got cut. To change the  
16 buses would really impact all of our  
17 education.

18 And my high school is not the  
19 only one Downtown either. There's other  
20 high schools, middle schools and daycares  
21 Downtown. And there's a reason they're  
22 all there. The buses make it accessible  
23 to students, parents and workers. Many of  
24 these people would have to find different  
25 places to go for education, childcare,

1 jobs if they weren't able to take the  
2 buses that they have been taking all this  
3 time.

4 I understand how it might  
5 seem right to cut certain buses because of  
6 funding issues, but public transportation  
7 really is the only mode of transportation  
8 some people have.

9 When I was younger, my mom  
10 did not have a car. The only way she  
11 could get me and my brother around was the  
12 buses. If she didn't have the buses back  
13 then, she would have likely not been able  
14 to get the job she had, been able to save  
15 up, buy groceries to feed our family, get  
16 checkups, and so much more.

17 This is the same situation  
18 for many families out there. They rely on  
19 the buses to be able to keep working,  
20 getting to school, get to the doctors, to  
21 keep living in Pittsburgh.

22 When you're making these  
23 decisions, yes, it's important to remember  
24 the funding issues, but it's also  
25 important to remember all the communities

1 that only have the buses as a form of  
2 transportation. Thank you for your time.

3 MODERATOR:

4 Thank you.

5 MR. NICKLOW:

6 Perri Smith.

7 Please state your name when  
8 you come down and spell it. You will have  
9 three minutes to speak with a warning for  
10 the one minute remaining.

11 MS. SMITH:

12 Perri Smith, P-E-R-R-I,  
13 S-M-I-T-H.

14 Hello. My name is Perri and  
15 ever since I could remember, I have been  
16 riding public transportation.

17 From riding in my stroller as  
18 a newborn on the 60 Crawford Village to  
19 walking on my tiny feet down to the hill  
20 to get to daycare because there wasn't an  
21 early enough bus. From taking the 61C  
22 McKeesport to get to any proper grocery  
23 store, to telling my friends I couldn't  
24 attend a hangout because it wasn't on the  
25 busway. From continuing to ride the 55

1 Glassport and the P7 McKeesport Flyer for  
2 all my high school career.

3                   And I'm going to be honest.  
4 I used to be ashamed to say I have to ride  
5 the bus, but now I embrace it. Public  
6 transportation is a part of me. It is how  
7 I grew up. My mom used to say, don't  
8 depend on anybody. I grew up not asking  
9 for a ride. I grew up analyzing the bus  
10 schedules. When someone would ask me, oh,  
11 what bus can I catch to get here? Or  
12 where can I catch this bus? I'd give a  
13 confident answer. And I silently tell  
14 myself, girl, you know your stuff.

15                   But for so many people like  
16 me, it's not just public transportation  
17 and there --- it's their life that they  
18 will be affected. It's someone's way to  
19 school. It's someone's way to work.  
20 It's someone's way to their job. It is  
21 someone's job. It's someone's way to the  
22 grocery store.

23                   It may seem like a minor  
24 change to some people, but for others ---  
25 but for others, it's someone's way to get

1 their baby to and from daycare.

2 MR. NICKLOW:

3 One minute.

4 MS. SMITH:

5 This may seem like a minor  
6 change to some people, but for others,  
7 it's an elimination to someone's everyday  
8 life. They analyzed the data to see what  
9 buses were to be cut, but did they analyze  
10 how this could be a major change to so  
11 many people's lives? Thank you.

12 MODERATOR:

13 Thank you.

14 MR. NICKLOW:

15 Madison Coulter.

16 Please state your name and  
17 spell it. You will have three minutes to  
18 speak with a warning for the one minute  
19 remaining.

20 MS. COULTER:

21 Madison Coulter,  
22 M-A-D-I-S-O-N, C-O-U-L-T-E-R, 15216.

23 Hello, I'm Madison Coulter.  
24 I live in Banksville. I go to City  
25 Charter High School. I get up every day

1 at 5:30 a.m. which is early for a teenager  
2 like me at 16 years old. I can ride the  
3 bus 38 from Green Tree to Downtown or I  
4 can also take the 36 from Banksville to  
5 Downtown.

6 The city is planning on  
7 cutting both of these buses which means I  
8 won't be able to get go to school and get  
9 the education that this city so  
10 desperately wants for its students. But  
11 it's not just me that will be affected.

12 Almost all of City High  
13 students, that's 630 children, 743 kappa  
14 students and other city high --- other  
15 schools, high school schools that won't be  
16 able to go downtown because of the bus  
17 cuts.

18 There's also adults that are  
19 affected by this. 54,653 college students  
20 will not be able to come down and get the  
21 education to start their lives and start  
22 their career. I've seen families come to  
23 bus that depend on these. I've had  
24 conversations with mothers that can't go  
25 anywhere because they don't have a car



1 because they can't afford it, and the bus  
2 is their only way to get around.

3           Along with the two buses that  
4 are getting cut, 41 in total buses are  
5 getting cut or getting delayed. It would  
6 take two hours now to get to places. I  
7 have personal friends that take longer.  
8 It's already an hour for them to get to  
9 school or to go to church or to go to  
10 their job.

11           Almost every Wednesday I ride  
12 the 2 or P13 to go to my friend's church.  
13 Religion is one of the top things in my  
14 life and is very important to me. And  
15 both of these buses are getting cut, which  
16 means I won't be able to go to a place  
17 that feels like a second home to me, which  
18 is devastating for me and devastating for  
19 multiple other people that ride the bus  
20 with me and go to that church. I won't be  
21 able to see the friends that I have come  
22 so close with, nor be able to talk to the  
23 adults that have affected my life for the  
24 better.

25           Now, I understand you can't

1 control the funds and the city is  
2 struggling, but I also think the funds are  
3 going to the wrong places, like electric  
4 buses. I've only seen three in total.  
5 What I need from this panel is to think  
6 about the true effects and the lives that  
7 they're changing, because it's much deeper  
8 than just cutting buses. Thank you for  
9 your time.

10 MODERATOR:

11 Thank you.

12 MR. NICKLOW:

13 James Love. Rosemary Wang.  
14 London Bellicott. Jaiqui Dennis. Tameara  
15 Robinson.

16 MS. ROBINSON:

17 Hi, I'm Tameara Robinson,  
18 T-A-M-E-A-R-A, R-O-B-I-N-S-O-N. My ZIP  
19 code is 15210.

20 Hi, I'm Tameara Robinson and  
21 I attend City Charter High School. The  
22 PRT cuts I'll be talking about are the 51L  
23 elimination and the 69 major reduction.

24 As you know, the 51 and the  
25 51L is the only form of PRT that goes

1 through Carrick. Every time I catch a 51  
2 or 51L, it is always consistently packed.  
3 The elimination of the 51L is and will  
4 cause overcrowding.

5 In the mornings when I attend  
6 City High, two young mothers with infants  
7 went to strangers to find out their  
8 children go to the same daycare they're  
9 sharing through each other's babies to  
10 them being best friends. These are one  
11 out of many other single mothers who can't  
12 take the bus and will have to pay more  
13 because of the 25 cent raise for three  
14 hour bus fares. What if they can't afford  
15 it?

16 The one day bus fare is a 50  
17 cent raise and a seven day bus fare is  
18 being raised by \$2. What should be the  
19 priority for single mothers? Having their  
20 children eat and have a stable home or go  
21 into work and drop their babies off to  
22 daycare they won't be able to afford, as  
23 if they're not already scraping the plates  
24 as it is? How is it possible they can  
25 make sure the babies eat and have a stable

1 home when you're taking the 51L away and  
2 raising bus fares? Where can they find a  
3 space to sit her and her baby down when  
4 the bus will be overcrowded?

5 Because many people have been  
6 kicked off the 51, 51L because of their  
7 hostility. Not only have I witnessed  
8 incidents on the 51, 51L but since the  
9 buses are already packed, there's plenty  
10 more witnesses where I come from.

11 Though I am very thankful for  
12 my schools funding us bus passes, they  
13 don't fund us for extracurricular  
14 activities. I go to a program called  
15 LEAP. It takes me an hour and 20 minutes  
16 to get there when I take the 51L downtown  
17 and the 69 to Carnegie Mellon where LEAP  
18 is at. The LEAP program is 9:00 a.m. to  
19 3:00 p.m. I'm leaving to get on the bus  
20 at 7:00 a.m. and I usually don't get home  
21 until around 4:30 p.m. That doesn't  
22 include me waiting for the bus.

23 What if I get to downtown and  
24 this 69 isn't coming for 30 minutes?  
25 Better yet, with the major reduction

1 you're proposing, what if it takes an  
2 hour? If it already takes me an hour 20  
3 minutes to get there, how long will it  
4 take me now? What if I can't make it  
5 home? What if other families with kids  
6 can't afford gas money or afford a car  
7 when their child is stuck somewhere else?

8 Gas money, inflation and  
9 taxes, now bus fares. Over time we keep  
10 getting things taken from us what we have  
11 left. Thank you.

12 MODERATOR:

13 Thank you.

14 MR. NICKLOW:

15 Lanya Hill.

16 Please state your name and  
17 spell it. You will have three minutes to  
18 speak with a one minute remainder warning.

19 MS. HILL:

20 Lanya Hill, L-A-N-Y-A,  
21 H-I-L-L.

22 Hi, my name is Lanya Hill.  
23 I'm here today to express my feelings  
24 about the bus cuts and how I will how it  
25 will affect me and every my everyday

1 commute.

2 I live on the north side of  
3 Pittsburgh. My buses are going through  
4 major reductions which will make it harder  
5 to get to school and work. I take the 13  
6 Bellevue regularly because it's the only  
7 bus that goes next to my house. I take  
8 the 13 Bellevue to school, City Charter  
9 High School and from home and from school.  
10 I also take the 12th McKnight to work and  
11 home five days out of the week.

12 The bus cuts will affect me  
13 tremendously. It will affect my school  
14 commute because it will take me even  
15 longer to get to school. The bus changes  
16 - - - the bus comes every 20 to 30 minutes  
17 now and I can only imagine how long it  
18 would take after these changes. The time  
19 that it takes for the bus to come and the  
20 time that takes to get Downtown, my  
21 commute to school is long and reductions  
22 in services will change. Me, it will  
23 cause me to be late regularly which will  
24 affect my grades in my first period class.

25 I take the 12 McKnight to

1 work. I work in retail at Ross Park Mall.  
2 These bus cuts will affect my work life.  
3 Our day does not end until --- our school  
4 day does not end until 4:15. And so  
5 reducing services will cause me to be late  
6 to work. I will no longer be able to keep  
7 my job that I enjoy and I will miss out on  
8 friendships I have made with my managers  
9 and co-workers. I will have no money and  
10 will be forced to find a --- another job  
11 closer to home.

12 These cuts won't just affect  
13 me, they will affect many people trying to  
14 get to work and school. Thank you.

15 MR. NICKLOW:

16 Taijoura Hopkins.

17 Please state your name and  
18 spell it. You will have three minutes to  
19 speak with a one minute remaining warning.

20 MS. HOPKINS:

21 T-A-I-J-O-U-R-A,  
22 H-O-P-K-I-N-S. My area code is 15003.

23 Good morning. My name is  
24 Taijoura Hopkins. I am from the South  
25 Side of Pittsburgh. After my 9th grade

1 year at City Charter High School I moved  
2 to Ambridge, PA with my mom sisters. By  
3 car, my house is 40 minutes away from the  
4 city. On the bus, my home is one hour and  
5 15 minutes away. Now I know what you're  
6 thinking. Why not go to Ambridge High  
7 School? I could have, but I knew City  
8 High was the school I wanted to graduate  
9 from because of academic opportunities.  
10 Also, if I tried to leave, my full  
11 transcript would not transfer, leaving me  
12 with credits I've already worked hard to  
13 get needing to be made up.

14 I ride the number 14 which  
15 would eventually be one of the buses being  
16 eliminated. The 14 already doesn't even  
17 go into the city. The farthest it takes  
18 me is the Allegheny Station and then I  
19 have to get off to get on the T that takes  
20 me to Gateway Station Downtown. I've been  
21 doing that every day since August 30,  
22 2023, my first day of 10th grade.

23 Equally important as my  
24 transportation to and from school, I go to  
25 church every Sunday on McKnight Road on



1 the 14th and the 012. My journey on  
2 strengthening my faith with Christ is so  
3 significant to me that I am willing to  
4 catch the bus from Ambridge to Ross Park.

5 Recently I have gotten my  
6 permit and soon I will be able to get my  
7 license which encouraged me to start  
8 saving up for a car. Even if I drove  
9 currently, parking is expensive in the  
10 city. I have teachers that commute by bus  
11 because they have enough expenses to pay  
12 for without paying for parking every day.

13 While I can stand here today  
14 and list off my multiple reasons that I  
15 have for being enraged about bus cuts, the  
16 world is so much bigger than me. People  
17 that drive will be dealing with longer  
18 traffic times, walkers might be more  
19 crowded on the streets and buses will be  
20 running less than they normally do. So  
21 people whose buses aren't being eliminated  
22 will get home way later than usual.

23 So to close out everything I  
24 have said today, I'll leave you with this  
25 thought. Reducing the PRT schedule and

1 routes will affect not only bus riders in  
2 the City of Pittsburgh, but the majority  
3 of Pittsburgh's population. I hope you  
4 take everything I say into consideration.  
5 Thank you.

6 MR. NICKLOW:

7 Do we have James Love?

8 Do we have any of the other  
9 students registered or not that are  
10 wanting to speak?

11 Okay. As you come down  
12 please state your name and spell it. You  
13 will have three minutes to speak with a  
14 reminder with - - - for one minute  
15 remaining. Please register if you did not  
16 out in the lobby.

17 MR. CANNON:

18 Hi, my name is Brayden  
19 Cannon, B-R-A-Y-D-E-N, C-A-N-N-O-N. I  
20 didn't come very prepared for today as I  
21 would feel with the bus beings cut.

22 I ride the 51 and the 51L ZIP  
23 code 15210 and the 51L would be fully  
24 eliminated causing more crowding on the 51  
25 than there already is. I think the 51

1 goes through five different neighborhoods.  
2 Brentwood, Carrick, Arlington, Mount  
3 Oliver and South Side. So all those  
4 together all combined for a reduced bus of  
5 only the 51 would cause crowding to be way  
6 higher.

7 And I just got my license and  
8 parking downtown costs an arm and a limb.  
9 It would be \$10 a day for me to park  
10 starting from next year with the bus cuts  
11 till I graduate would cost me \$660 for me  
12 to park till I graduated just Downtown.

13 With the bus cuts, if it  
14 already takes me almost 40 minutes on the  
15 51 to get to school in the morning,  
16 imagine how longer it would be with  
17 crowding. And there's people behind me,  
18 like my fellow students who have less of a  
19 time and less buses to take now due to the  
20 cuts, who buses are getting eliminated and  
21 will not be able to physically attend City  
22 High anymore.

23 And I just --- I think that  
24 everyone on this panel, I think, can all  
25 agree that the bus cut is a lot for all of

1 us students who have to deal with it and  
2 go through it. And I wish that you take  
3 all of everything that we said into  
4 consideration and try to help us students  
5 who would really like to attend City High,  
6 to be able to commute through buses,  
7 through work and every other thing else  
8 that we have to go through for this.  
9 Thank you, guys.

10 MODERATOR:

11 Thank you, Brayden.

12 MR. NICKLOW:

13 Thank you very much. At this  
14 time, we are going to take a short break  
15 to make some audio adjustments. The  
16 hearing will go off the record during this  
17 time. We will be right back.

18 - - -

19 (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS HELD.)

20 - - -

21 MR. NICKLOW:

22 Okay.

23 We are ready to resume. A  
24 reminder, this session is being recorded  
25 and transcribed by a court reporter. If

1 you do not wish to be recorded, please  
2 exit the room.

3 Each speaker will have three  
4 minutes to provide public comment. When  
5 called, please approach the speaker's  
6 table, clearly state your full name and  
7 spell it slowly for the recording before  
8 beginning.

9 We will start with Carolyn  
10 Kerr.

11 MS. KERR:

12 My name is Carolyn Kerr,  
13 C-A-R-O-L-Y-N, K-E-R-R.

14 I'm lucky. I have a car.  
15 Still, I came to Oakland today the way I  
16 did for most of the 25 years I taught in  
17 the College of Business Administration at  
18 Pitt. By transit. Why did I do that?  
19 Partly to keep the air just a little bit  
20 cleaner. Partly to keep one more car out  
21 of the lines of traffic. Partly to free  
22 up one parking space for someone who  
23 wasn't as lucky as I am.

24 I'm lucky to live somewhere I  
25 love. My fifth great grandfather surveyed

1 and laid out Downtown Pittsburgh. So I  
2 take what happens here seriously and  
3 personally. I want to see our region  
4 thrive.

5 I'm lucky that I was able to  
6 help a refugee family settle in. That  
7 included helping the father learn to  
8 navigate a bus to South Hills Junction and  
9 the Silver Line to his job. A job he  
10 wouldn't be able to take without transit.

11 A job where he has been repeatedly  
12 promoted. A job that has supported his  
13 family and allowed them to buy a house and  
14 grow the tax base.

15 Then I think about other  
16 people, those facing challenges I can't  
17 imagine, like how they will try to manage  
18 to move about using just a bicycle up and  
19 down our beautiful but challenging hills.  
20 I can't imagine what it's like not to be  
21 able to get to a grocery store or a  
22 pharmacy or a doctor's appointment or find  
23 a job to support themselves.

24 I think about all that our  
25 region has to offer in the way of arts,

1 sports, education and learning. How do  
2 our young people become the foundation for  
3 tomorrow's success if they can't get to  
4 the library or to see the wonders left to  
5 us by people who couldn't begin to picture  
6 what our lives look like today? But those  
7 people were part of generations who knew  
8 that public transportation was one key to  
9 vibrancy, growth and progress.

10 A few years ago, a special  
11 initiative was placed on the ballot to  
12 support the Carnegie Library system. It  
13 passed overwhelmingly. I, for one,  
14 retired and on a budget though I am, would  
15 certainly support some type of similar  
16 initiative to fund public transit.

17 MR. NICKLOW:

18 One minute remaining.

19 MS. KERR:

20 It might only be a dent, but  
21 it could be a start. Maybe employers  
22 along the lines could help. There are  
23 lots of good ideas if only we look for  
24 them instead of for cuts.

25 Yes, I am lucky, and today I

1 am lucky to be given this chance to speak  
2 up for those who aren't as lucky as I am.  
3 Let's all work together to find ways to  
4 help them until their luck can change.  
5 Thank you.

6 MODERATOR:

7 Thank you, Carolyn.

8 MR. NICKLOW:

9 Richard Walter.

10 As a reminder, please state  
11 your name and spell your full name before  
12 beginning to speak. You will have three  
13 minutes with a reminder for the one minute  
14 warning.

15 MR. WALTER:

16 Yeah, I'm Richard Walter,  
17 W-A-L-T-E-R.

18 I'm from the South Hills. I  
19 take the Silver Line. I'm on dialysis  
20 three days a week. I go to doctor's  
21 appointments and visit friends and go  
22 other places to the malls and that. And  
23 if I lose public transportation, I won't  
24 be able to --- I won't be able to go to  
25 any of these places and go shopping and do



1 a lot of other things, too. So I just  
2 hope I keep this transit going. So thank  
3 you very much.

4 MODERATOR:

5 Thank you, Richard.

6 MR. NICKLOW:

7 Juanita Knight. Erin Morgan.

8 Please state your full name and spell it  
9 for the recorder. You will have three  
10 minutes to speak with a reminder for one  
11 minute remaining.

12 MS. MORGAN:

13 Erin Morgan, E-R-I-N,  
14 M-O-R-G-A-N.

15 Good morning. My name is  
16 Erin Morgan and I'm a resident of City of  
17 Pittsburgh and a caseworker who supports  
18 refugees and immigrants at JFCS, a  
19 nonprofit in Squirrel Hill. Many families  
20 we serve will be deeply affected by the  
21 proposed cuts to bus routes. I want to  
22 share the story of one such family.

23 They arrived in the United  
24 States as refugees in late 2023. While  
25 waiting for permanent housing, they stayed

1 in a hotel and relied on the bus to reach  
2 JFCS for English as a Second Language  
3 classes and other services.

4                   Once housing became  
5 available, they moved to the Crafton area  
6 along Routes 27 and 29, now set to be  
7 eliminated. Their only remaining route,  
8 the 26, will have major reductions. Both  
9 parents found jobs, one near Fox Chapel  
10 and the other in Lawrenceville. But now  
11 the bus routes they depend on to get to  
12 work are being eliminated or severely  
13 reduced. The family already balances long  
14 commutes, walking and childcare. These  
15 cuts could force them to leave the jobs  
16 they like where they are valued.

17                   For immigrant families,  
18 finding a new job isn't easy. Many face  
19 language barriers and limited employment  
20 options. Without savings or a strong  
21 support network, a job loss could quickly  
22 lead to an eviction and put more strain on  
23 local agencies and government support  
24 services.

25                   Right now, they use the 26,

1 27 or 29 for weekly shopping. Two of  
2 those will be eliminated and the third  
3 reduced. Without a bus, they'd have to  
4 walk one and a half miles, about 34  
5 minutes, carrying groceries for a family  
6 of five. Many of the roads the family  
7 would have to walk don't have sidewalks.

8 They've already overcome so  
9 much. Cutting these routes will make  
10 daily life significantly harder, - - -

11 MR. NICKLOW:

12 One minute remaining.

13 MS. MORGAN:

14 - - - not just for them, but  
15 for the families like theirs. Public  
16 transit is a vital lifeline for our  
17 communities, and I urge you to consider  
18 the real impact these changes will have.

19 MODERATOR:

20 Thank you, Erin.

21 MR. NICKLOW:

22 Juanita Knight.

23 Please state your name and  
24 spell it for the recorder when you come up  
25 to the microphone. You will have three

1 minutes to speak with a reminder for one  
2 minute remaining.

3 MS. KNIGHT:

4 Okay.

5 Hello. Hi. Good evening ---  
6 good noon. My name is Juanita Knight.  
7 First name J-U-A-N-I-T-A, Knight,  
8 K-N-I-G-H-T.

9 Okay. I'm here for my  
10 concerns about these bus cuts and living  
11 in late hours last service. I have nieces  
12 and nephews that work on North Hills and I  
13 live in Bellevue. They live in Penn  
14 Hills, but they will go all across town to  
15 work. And if they stop the last bus at  
16 11:00 at night and they don't get off work  
17 until 11:00, I don't know how they going  
18 to get home from North Hills to Penn  
19 Hills.

20 And two, I don't see why you  
21 have all these buses coming to Oakland.  
22 We're short on it. Just looping around in  
23 a circle for nowhere. You have buses  
24 going to nowhere, then you want to raise  
25 the bus fare to where? What we going to

1 do when you raise the bus fare? Hop bus  
2 to bus. And then you got to wait for only  
3 certain buses to take you to Oakland.

4 I work out here in Oakland.  
5 I work at a Pitt University across the  
6 street. And I've been working there 45  
7 years and I never had problems getting any  
8 bus from Downtown Pittsburgh to Oakland or  
9 from Oakland back to Downtown.

10 Then when you're standing  
11 there waiting for a bus to take you  
12 Downtown, when you get off work, four  
13 buses going past you, all of them say  
14 short when you get the next two, and then  
15 I missed my connection Downtown. And if  
16 you eliminate certain buses on the north  
17 side or Brighton Heights or Bellevue  
18 anywhere, it's going to make it hard for  
19 people to get around.

20 You have --- a lot of these  
21 companies are hiring, but they're hiring  
22 for hours, closing hours. How are you  
23 going to close if you have no bus to get  
24 home? Everybody doesn't have vehicles and  
25 I'm sure everyone sitting up here on this

1 here podium don't take a bus to work.  
2 And when you ride that bus, you see how we  
3 feel. Then you give us some other thought  
4 about eliminate service. Because you call  
5 it PRT regional. It's not regional  
6 anymore. It's picking and choosing right  
7 now what you want to do.

8 So to me, please do not  
9 eliminate any services or cut any fare ---  
10 you know, raise the fare of eliminate any  
11 service or eliminate bus service. Take  
12 that into consideration and --- please.  
13 Thank you.

14 MODERATOR:

15 Thank you, Juanita.

16 MS. KNIGHT:

17 Okay.

18 MODERATOR:

19 And just a reminder, the  
20 purpose of today's hearing is for us to  
21 receive public comment. So if we're not  
22 commenting or responding, that's why.

23 MR. NICKLOW:

24 Ariana Lucia Aguilar.

25 As a reminder, please state

1 your name and spell it for the recorder.  
2 You will have three minutes to speak with  
3 a one minute remaining.

4 MS. AGUILAR:

5 My name is Arianna Aguilar.  
6 A-R-I-A-N-N-A, last name A-G-U-I-L-A-R.

7 Hello. My name is Arianna. I  
8 am a resident of Millville. I work with  
9 refugee youth and their families. And  
10 like most of my clients, I cannot drive  
11 and rely primarily on PRT for both my  
12 professional and personal life.

13 The current level of service  
14 is already unsustainably low. Because  
15 there is no crosstown bus to Millville, my  
16 spouse must drive me across the bridge to  
17 Lawrenceville to get the 64 to my offices  
18 in Squirrel Hill, where I work primarily.  
19 Or I must walk a long way through the  
20 dangerous crossing of East Ohio and the  
21 40th Street Bridge. The bus is infrequent  
22 and unreliable. So logistically, this  
23 commute is very challenging.

24 I also take the bus all over  
25 the county for my job. For example, to

1 get to Carrick, Brentwood and Baldwin for  
2 youth programs, I take the 2 to Downtown,  
3 which only comes once an hour, and then I  
4 transfer to one of the 51s which are often  
5 too full on my way back as kids getting  
6 off school fill the bus.

7                   We need more trains in  
8 Pittsburgh, not less. I've relied on the  
9 T to get to South Hills Middle and  
10 Brashear from Downtown, which is a rare  
11 respite from being stuck in traffic caused  
12 by cars. I then walk 20 more minutes to  
13 my destination because there is no direct  
14 bus route to the largest public school in  
15 the city.

16                   Like my clients, I struggle  
17 to get to where I need to be due to the  
18 prioritization of cars over people and  
19 transit. Kids have difficulties getting  
20 to school, families cannot be active in  
21 the school community and are unable to  
22 attend school events.

23                   Transit is the number one  
24 barrier we face in our work as many  
25 families are also unable to take advantage



1 of our programs which help them and their  
2 kids acclimate and thrive in their new  
3 community because transportation is such a  
4 difficulty.

5                   Additionally, paying the fare  
6 for each family member over five is  
7 already cost prohibitive for large  
8 families.

9                   The effects to my community  
10 of the gradual loss of transit have  
11 already been devastating. Allegheny  
12 County already has a huge drunk driving  
13 problem. It will only get worse. My  
14 neighbor will lose the only bus he can  
15 take to go to work on McKnight Road.

16                   Another rider on the 2 said  
17 if they take this, they might as well put  
18 us in jail. Transit is freedom of  
19 movement. It is a right. We need faster,  
20 more abundant transit for the city to grow  
21 and thrive economically in addition to  
22 safer streets for humans and not cars.  
23 And I'm emotional because every day I fear  
24 for my life because of people in the  
25 streets in the city who threaten my life

1 daily with their vehicles.

2 MR. NICKLOW:

3 One minute remaining.

4 MS. AGUILAR:

5 Everyone will benefit from  
6 better transit and more thriving small  
7 businesses, safer streets, less traffic  
8 and space recovered for parking on  
9 highways. What we have already is far  
10 below what we need and losing 40 percent  
11 of service will be a death sentence for  
12 the city and region.

13 We demand a funding source  
14 that treats our public transit like the  
15 essential service it is and that can, at  
16 minimum, restore PRT to 2019 service  
17 levels. Thank you.

18 MODERATOR:

19 Thank you, Arianna.

20 MR. NICKLOW:

21 Sania Jones. Sam Salopek.  
22 Lorita Gillespie. Edward Kearns.

23 We've reached the edge of our  
24 allowable time to get ahead. Is there  
25 anybody who is registered to speak present

1 that would like to do so early?

2 Is there anybody who would  
3 like to speak who has not yet registered?

4 Please state your name  
5 clearly and spell it for the recorder.  
6 You will have three minutes to speak with  
7 a reminder at the one minute remaining  
8 point.

9 MR. GREEN:

10 Sean Green. I'm here to save  
11 ACCESS because we really need it, because  
12 where I am, I cannot take the Port  
13 Authority bus because it's not accessible.  
14 And I don't like the --- I don't like the  
15 --- I do not like the budget cuts.

16 I ride practically every day,  
17 and I need my ACCESS to be attached  
18 because that's how I get around. And I  
19 would be at home with nothing to go to if  
20 I was --- if I was not able to go out.  
21 And I go out a lot. And I use a lot of  
22 ACCESS. I use it for church. I use it  
23 for my dances, my activities that I go to,  
24 which is practically every day, every  
25 night.

1 I want --- and I --- and I  
2 don't --- and with the price going up with  
3 ACCESS, I don't --- I mean, I'm not made  
4 of --- I'm an individual with a  
5 disability, and I do not have that money  
6 to throw around to put all toward my  
7 transportation. I need help.

8 I would lose --- and I like  
9 the drivers that I ride with because I  
10 ride with different carriers every couple  
11 weeks. They're real nice. They're very  
12 helpful.

13 I would like to see --- I  
14 would like to have my transportation paid  
15 for because if the ACCESS goes up, I don't  
16 think I could afford it, but I'm trying to  
17 --- I'm just telling you how it is because  
18 I --- and I do not like --- I like --- I  
19 don't like to transfer. I ---.

20 MR. NICKLOW:

21 One minute remaining.

22 MR. GREEN:

23 I would prefer --- I would  
24 prefer --- because a lot of people around  
25 my neighborhood uses ACCESS, and if they

1   lose it, we're all stuck.

2                   MODERATOR:

3                   Thank you, Sean.

4                   MR. GREEN:

5                   Thank you.

6                   MR. NICKLOW:

7                   Sania Jones.   Sam Salopek.

8   Lorita Gillespie.   Edward Kearns.   Christy

9   Seichtor.   Nicole Hyslop.   Ryan Matthews.

10                  Please state your name in the

11   microphone and spell it for the recorder.

12   You will have three minutes to speak with

13   a reminder for one minute remaining.

14                  MR. MATTHEWS:

15                  Hello.   My name is Ryan

16   Matthews.   That's R-Y-A-N, Matthews with

17   two T's.   That's M-A-T-T-H-E-W-S.

18                  So hello, I'm Ryan.   I am a

19   University of Pittsburgh alum.   And I rode

20   the T here and the bus here today.   So I

21   came from the end of the Silver Line, went

22   through Downtown, and then picked up one

23   of the 61 and 71 buses between Downtown

24   and Oakland.

25                  So I went to Pitt between

1 2014 and 2018, and I was what we called a  
2 commuter. So I lived in the South Hills.  
3 At that time it wasn't the Silver Line,  
4 but it was by Washington Junction. So I  
5 could walk from my parents house down the  
6 hill, get on at Washington Junction and in  
7 about 25 minutes you would be Downtown.  
8 So that was pretty sweet.

9 I'm not sure if it's still  
10 true today, but at the time when I was  
11 going to Pitt, you had a student ID card  
12 and as part of your tuition you got a Port  
13 Authority pass. It's now called  
14 Pittsburgh Regional Transit. So as a Pitt  
15 student I was able to ride anywhere in  
16 Pittsburgh, any bus, any train, even the  
17 incline that I wanted, just scan my ID and  
18 go for it.

19 So for four years I took  
20 advantage of that to the fullest. Every  
21 day, Monday through Friday I was going  
22 between the South Hills and Oakland to go  
23 to school. A bunch of my student friends  
24 would ride to the grocery store or  
25 wherever they wanted to go on the bus.

1                   So that was pretty important  
2 to me. I think that's pretty useful. So  
3 I think that's something that we should  
4 obviously continue.

5                   I guess another little thing  
6 to add is last night I rode from my  
7 parents house at Washington Junction, like  
8 I told you, back down to my house on the  
9 Silver Line and I got on the train at  
10 Washington Junction at - - - .

11                   MR. NICKLOW:

12                   One minute remaining.

13                   MR. MATTHEWS:

14                   Thanks.

15                   I got on the train at  
16 Washington Junction at 11:56 p.m. So I  
17 also knew that there's two things there.  
18 One is that the Silver Line is one of the  
19 proposed line cuts and two is that no  
20 servers would be running after 11:00 p.m.  
21 so that's a double whammy. Two things  
22 that wouldn't work out for me there.

23                   So anyways, I obviously would  
24 like this funding to go through. I would  
25 like to still be able to use all these

1 things and I would like people after me to  
2 still be able to do things like commute to  
3 University of Pittsburgh using their Pitt  
4 ID. So please get Pittsburgh funded and  
5 thanks for your time.

6 MODERATOR:

7 Thank you, Ryan.

8 MR. NICKLOW:

9 We've reached the edge of our  
10 registered list. Is there anyone  
11 registered to speak later who would like  
12 to speak early?

13 Is there anyone who has not  
14 yet registered who would like to speak?

15 Please come down, state your  
16 name. Spell it for the recorder. As a  
17 reminder, you'll have three minutes to  
18 speak and get a reminder at the one minute  
19 to go.

20 MS. LONGSTREET:

21 Hi, my name is Cheryl  
22 Longstreet, C-H-E-R-Y-L,  
23 L-O-N-G-S-T-R-E-E-T.

24 I'm sorry, I'm not really  
25 prepared. But earlier someone said



1 they're lucky because they have a car. I  
2 too have a car so I can get where I need  
3 to go and where I want to go.

4 The reality is my husband  
5 doesn't drive, so I'm the driver in the  
6 family. Unfortunately, I have a condition  
7 that's eventually going to impact my  
8 ability to drive. And so we will be  
9 obligated to take the buses everywhere.  
10 We still take the bus a lot.

11 And what I want to do this  
12 morning is speak on behalf of the City of  
13 Pittsburgh. Already our city is being  
14 impacted mightily by reduction in funds to  
15 our universities, which are our biggest  
16 employers. We're being impacted in the  
17 arts. I was just reading an email from  
18 one of the art places that we support, and  
19 they've just lost all their grants from  
20 the federal government. We also know in  
21 the city that many of the buildings that  
22 are down there have had their taxes  
23 reduced. And so the money coming into our  
24 city is greatly reduced.

25 And I just feel making these

1 kind of cuts, these eliminations to the  
2 Regional Transit System is just the last  
3 nail in the coffin for a city that I love,  
4 that I was born into, which I chose to  
5 move back to as a retired person because  
6 of the transportation, the arts abilities,  
7 the chances to participate in the arts, in  
8 sports, in all sorts of things. I mean,  
9 on Sunday we had what? What were they  
10 saying? 200,000 people in town or some  
11 crazy thing and for the marathon.

12 So I don't want to see my  
13 city die. And I think reducing the  
14 services like that is just not okay.  
15 Thank you.

16 MODERATOR:

17 Thank you, Cheryl.

18 MR. NICKLOW:

19 We've come to our ten minute  
20 break. We will now take a brief pause.  
21 This hearing will go off the record during  
22 this time. Thank you for your patience.

23 - - -

24 (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS HELD.)

25 - - -

1                   MR. NICKLOW:

2                   All right.

3                   We're ready to resume the  
4 hearing. A reminder that this session is  
5 being recorded and transcribed by a court  
6 reporter. If you do not wish to be  
7 recorded, please exit the room now.

8                   Each speaker will have three  
9 minutes to provide public comment. When  
10 called, please approach the speaker's  
11 table, clearly state your full name and  
12 spell it slowly for the recording before  
13 starting your speech.

14                   Cheryl Longstreet. Tia  
15 Gamboa.

16                   MS. GAMBOA:

17                   Hello. My name is Thea  
18 Gamboa. First name is T-H-E-A. Last name  
19 G-A-M-B-O-A. And I live in the 15227 ZIP  
20 code.

21                   Can I start? Okay.

22                   MODERATOR:

23                   Yep, go ahead. Take your  
24 time. You're good.

25                   MS. GAMBOA:

1 I work at JFCS, where I  
2 support immigrants in our community.  
3 Today I want to highlight how proposed  
4 cuts to public transportation could harm  
5 not just individuals, but the local  
6 economy as a whole.

7 According to the new  
8 Americans in Pittsburgh Report by the  
9 American Immigration Counsel, immigrants  
10 contributed about \$3.5 billion to the  
11 city's GDP, making up 11.1 percent of the  
12 total. Immigrants helped stabilize  
13 Pittsburgh's economy, offset population  
14 decline, and maintain vital tax revenue.

15 Between 2014 and 2019,  
16 Pittsburgh's overall population shrank by  
17 1.3 percent, while the immigrant  
18 population grew by nearly 19 percent.  
19 Without that growth, our population  
20 decline would have been even more severe.

21 Across the Great Lakes  
22 region, immigrants are revitalizing  
23 communities, opening businesses,  
24 supporting essential industries like  
25 healthcare and manufacturing, and helping

1 reverse decades of stagnation. But  
2 without reliable bus service, many of  
3 these workers simply won't be able to get  
4 to their jobs. It's unrealistic to assume  
5 that families living paycheck to pay can  
6 afford a car just to stay employed. Some  
7 may take on debt to do so, but many won't  
8 have that option.

9 Cutting bus routes such as  
10 the 28X to the airport, where many  
11 immigrant families are employed, 21  
12 Coraopolis to get Downtown, 93 and 64  
13 Hazelwood and Waterfront to Lawrenceville,  
14 where many clients work, risks  
15 destabilizing the very workforce that is  
16 helping Pittsburgh grow.

17 You can see in this room the  
18 many immigrants JFCS serves would be  
19 impacted. All the people standing up are  
20 staff members who are holding a paper.  
21 Each paper shows a different zip code  
22 impacted by the proposed eliminations and  
23 reductions of routes. Each paper shows  
24 the number of clients JFCS served in that  
25 zip code in the years 2023 and 2024.

1                   Look around you to see all  
2     the clients impacted. You'll see that the  
3     total across all ZIP codes is 2,327. The  
4     number reflects clients in only two of the  
5     programs in our department, - - -

6                   MR. NICKLOW:

7                   One minute remaining.

8                   MS. GAMBOA:

9                   - - - so it doesn't even  
10    account for all the clients we serve.  
11    And it certainly doesn't account for the  
12    many more immigrants living in Pittsburgh  
13    who don't receive our services.

14                  We strongly urge PRT to  
15    consider the broad and serious  
16    consequences these cuts would bring, not  
17    only for immigrant families, but for  
18    businesses and the economy at large.

19                  In Pittsburgh, continued  
20    investment in public transit is essential  
21    to keep our workforce moving, our  
22    neighborhoods thriving, and our economy  
23    growing. Cutting these services doesn't  
24    just limit mobility. It undermines the  
25    people and industries driving our city

1 forward. Thank you.

2 MODERATOR:

3 Thank you, Thea.

4 MR. NICKLOW:

5 Aneesa Fulton.

6 As a reminder, please state  
7 your name and spell it slowly for the  
8 recorder. You will have three minutes  
9 with a reminder of one minute remaining.

10 MS. FULTON:

11 Okay. Good morning. My name  
12 is Aneesa Fulton, A-N-E-E-S-A,  
13 F-U-L-T-O-N.

14 I'm a resident of Allegheny  
15 County and a caseworker at JFCS, where I  
16 work in the Refugee and Immigration  
17 Service Department. Today I want to share  
18 two stories that highlight the very real  
19 consequences of the proposed bus route  
20 cuts. Stories of individuals whose  
21 health, safety and livelihoods would be  
22 put at risk if these changes go into  
23 effect.

24 So the first story is of a  
25 woman who depends heavily on public

1 transportation. She regularly uses the 87  
2 bus from her home, along with the 77, 93  
3 and 54, to get to critical medical  
4 appointments. She's a single woman living  
5 with a respiratory condition that makes  
6 walking even short distances extremely  
7 difficult. She must carry an oxygen tank  
8 wherever she goes, making routine tasks  
9 like grocery shopping or laundry,  
10 physically taxing. She has no nearby  
11 family or friends to assist her.

12 If the 87 is eliminated, she  
13 will no longer be able to walk the  
14 additional distance to an alternative  
15 stop. There are few job opportunities  
16 near her home and there's a serious safety  
17 concern due to the absence of sidewalks in  
18 her area. While she qualifies for MATP,  
19 it's only through bus passes, not door to  
20 door services.

21 So without these routes, she  
22 would lose access to her doctors. Her  
23 medical needs are complex and require  
24 travel to multiple specialists across the  
25 region, not all in one place.



1           The second story is about a  
2 14 month old child living with a lifelong  
3 illness. This family relies entirely on  
4 the 20 and 88 bus routes for access to  
5 medical care and work. The child's  
6 condition prevents them from attending  
7 daycare, which in turn prevents the mother  
8 from working. This places the burden of  
9 income entirely on the father, and if  
10 those routes are cut, his ability to get  
11 to work would be seriously compromised.

12           Virtual appointments aren't a  
13 viable option for this family either.  
14 They also need to access pharmacy for both  
15 mental and physical health medications,  
16 again via the 88 bus.

17           MR. NICKLOW:

18           One minute remaining.

19           MS. FULTON:

20           While we recognize the  
21 difficult position PRT is in, we urge you  
22 to consider the human cost of these  
23 service reductions. These are not just  
24 numbers on a spreadsheet. These are  
25 lives. These are people who are simply

1 trying to survive in an already fractured  
2 economy. We are pleading with you to hear  
3 their stories and explore alternative  
4 solutions that don't further marginalize  
5 our most vulnerable neighbors. Thank you.

6 MODERATOR:

7 Thank you.

8 MR. NICKLOW:

9 Kristin Abdullah.

10 Please state your name and  
11 spell it for the recorder. You will have  
12 three minutes to speak. A reminder at one  
13 minute remaining.

14 MS. ABDULLAH:

15 My name is Kristen Abdullah,  
16 K-R-I-S-T-E-N, A-B-D-U-L-L-A-H. And I'm a  
17 resident of Pittsburgh and a caseworker  
18 who works with refugees and immigrants at  
19 JFCS Jewish Family and Community Services,  
20 where we are all from.

21 I want to share a story that  
22 shows how essential public transportation  
23 is not just for becoming self sufficient,  
24 but also for building a life in a  
25 community.

1                   One of our clients is a  
2 single mother with three young children.  
3 She relies on the routes P78 and 1 to get  
4 her kids to daycare so she can work and  
5 afford rent. The only daycare she could  
6 find is a long walk away along busy roads,  
7 unsafe and difficult with three small  
8 children.

9                   Now that two of her kids are  
10 in school, she still needs the bus to get  
11 her youngest to childcare and herself to  
12 work. She lives in a neighborhood where  
13 no one speaks her language. The bus has  
14 been her lifeline, not just for practical  
15 needs, but to connect with other Swahili  
16 speakers in the city as well.

17                  She faced major barriers.  
18 She never learned to read as a child  
19 because of the conflict and lack of  
20 schooling in the country she fled. But  
21 she figured out how to use the bus  
22 anyways. She learned complex routes, she  
23 made multiple transfers, and she traveled  
24 long distances just to find a sense of  
25 belonging.

1                   Thanks to the bus, she's  
2   improving her English, holding a job and  
3   building sustainability. But if she loses  
4   access to routes P78 or route 1,  
5   everything she's worked so hard for could  
6   unravel. Her job would be at risk, her  
7   mental health would suffer, and her  
8   child's care could be disrupted.

9                   The story isn't unique.  
10   Many families depend on these routes to  
11   survive and thrive. And I urge you to  
12   reconsider these cuts as they would have a  
13   serious human cost. Thank you.

14                   MODERATOR:

15                   Thank you.

16                   MR. NICKLOW:

17                   Gale Albright.

18                   Please state your name for  
19   the recorder and spell it slowly. You  
20   will have three minutes to speak with a  
21   reminder at one minute remaining.

22                   MS. ALBRIGHT:

23                   Thank you.

24                   My name is Gale Albright,  
25   G - A - L - E, A - L - B - R - I - G - H - T.

1 I live in Polish Hill. I  
2 took the bus here, the 54D, to get here  
3 today. And I use that bus for multiple  
4 reasons. For example, getting to  
5 healthcare appointments at West Penn  
6 Hospital and also to get into Oakland.  
7 Very difficult to drive, park in Oakland.  
8 And this is a wonderful way.

9 The 54D, in particular, the  
10 stop at Heron Avenue and Dobson Street is  
11 what allows me to use this bus route to  
12 get to medical appointments and also other  
13 neighborhoods like the Strip district, the  
14 South Side, the North Side.

15 The bus way down at the  
16 bottom of the hill is impossible for me  
17 and many of my neighbors to get to. It's  
18 very steep hills, very long, many steps,  
19 and it's simply impossible for many of us  
20 to get down to and get back up out of.  
21 That's where the importance of the 54d and  
22 particularly the stop at Heron and Dobson  
23 is very important to us.

24 We also have a senior  
25 building in Polish Hill, the John Paul

1 Plaza. Again, many of those people ride  
2 that bus to get around the city to  
3 appointments and other necessary  
4 activities.

5 So I'm asking if you could  
6 Please keep the 54d route to allow our  
7 mobility through the city. It also  
8 connects us with the airport, just with  
9 connecting in Oakland, which is very  
10 important as well. So appreciate your  
11 listening and thank you.

12 MODERATOR:

13 Thank you, Gale.

14 MR. NICKLOW: Thomas Ogden.

15 Please state your full name  
16 in the microphone and spell it slowly for  
17 the recorder. You will have three minutes  
18 to speak and a reminder at one minute  
19 remaining.

20 MR. OGDEN:

21 Yes, my name is Tom Ogden,  
22 T-O-M, O-G-D-E-N. I'm a neighbor of the  
23 person who just spoke. My concerns are  
24 very, very similar, if not exactly the  
25 same.

1                   One of the things for me  
2 personally, I can get on and off Polish  
3 Hill in many forms, but primarily I'm here  
4 for my community. I could bike where I  
5 need to go. I could walk down that hill,  
6 down Heron Avenue to get to Liberty Avenue  
7 where there could be a connection. But  
8 there are many, many people in my  
9 neighborhood who cannot, including my  
10 wife. That hill's steep, if you're at all  
11 familiar with it. So it's truly  
12 impossible.

13                   And I want to reiterate.  
14 John Paul High Rise is chock full of  
15 people who are disabled, and they rely on  
16 that bus to get off of that hill, whether  
17 they're coming to Oakland or Bloomfield,  
18 where so many of their services are.  
19 Shopping, medical care, or just the  
20 ability to enjoy life. Take a walk, maybe  
21 go to have a cup of coffee or a  
22 restaurant.

23                   In fact, on the way here, I  
24 noticed somebody with a navy jacket on, an  
25 elderly woman. And because I'm involved

1 with the VA as well, I created a  
2 conversation with her. And she happened  
3 to live on John Paul Plaza and she  
4 expressed to me her use of this bus.  
5 She's new to the city. She moved here  
6 because her daughter's family is here.  
7 She moved from - - - I forget where. She  
8 told me, oh, North Central Pennsylvania.  
9 So she's one example of somebody who's  
10 from John Paul Plaza who I just happened  
11 to meet on the bus on the way here.

12 Let me check my notes, make  
13 sure there isn't some specific that I'm  
14 missing. That's pretty much it. I want  
15 to say thank you for the opportunity to be  
16 here. It's gratifying to be able to have  
17 a voice. Thank you very much.

18 MODERATOR:

19 Thank you for joining us  
20 today, Tom, and for providing us your  
21 comment.

22 MR. NICKLOW:

23 Daniel Rojas.

24 Please state your full name  
25 and spell it for the recorder. You will



1 have three minutes to speak and a reminder  
2 for one minute remaining.

3 MR. ROJAS:

4 D-A-N-I-E-L, R-O-J-A-S.

5 I live in 15132 area code,  
6 the Mon Valley, and bus service is very  
7 bad. We used to have a train that rode  
8 from Versailles, stopped in McKeesport,  
9 stopped in Braddock, and went to  
10 Pittsburgh. That was back in the 80s, way  
11 before a lot of people's time.

12 There's no bus service in the  
13 Port View, Liberty Borough area. And it's  
14 horrible. I live up on a hill. For me to  
15 get down to the bus stop, I got to walk  
16 all the way down the hill. There's not a  
17 sidewalk, and if it is, it's crooked and  
18 lopsided. You got to walk in the street  
19 and then you have to walk back up the  
20 hill.

21 I have pulmonary fibrosis.  
22 It's a lung disease that's no cure for.  
23 And I just want to say we don't need these  
24 --- anymore cuts because of this budgets  
25 or whatever. They need to go to the big

1 politicians and bring it to the office and  
2 say, hey, we need this service for these  
3 people to have to work and go back and  
4 forth. Thank you for your time.

5 MODERATOR:

6 Thank you, Dan.

7 MR. NICKLOW:

8 Wayne Reno.

9 Please state your name and  
10 spell it for the recorder. You will have  
11 three minutes to speak with a reminder for  
12 one minute remaining.

13 MR. RENO:

14 My name is Wayne Reno,  
15 W-A-Y-N-E, R-E-N-O. I'm from Bethel Park.  
16 Moved there in 2019. My wife and I bought  
17 a house there. One of the primary reasons  
18 was the proximity to the Silver Line.  
19 I'm concerned about any of these cuts for  
20 everybody involved, but I thought I'd come  
21 and speak about my neck of the woods.

22 My daughter and her husband  
23 and grandkids also bought a house right  
24 there in Bethel Park by the T for going  
25 into PNC for him and SAP for her. And we

1 all like to use it for work, for shopping,  
2 for recreation, for sports. It's just ---  
3 I mean, it's so convenient to be able to  
4 do that and to go down to the Montour  
5 Trail and library or come all the way into  
6 town for cultural events or the sporting  
7 events or to shop or just walk along the  
8 river.

9                   It's just a way of life there  
10 in the South Hills. And of course, I was  
11 disappointed to see that because of the  
12 \$100 million funding shortfall for next  
13 year, that it would get cut, which is what  
14 obviously brought me here today.

15                   I mean, aside from being  
16 convenient, it's a charming way to travel.  
17 I've been riding on the trolley since  
18 being a kid in the 50s, so. And I know  
19 there was a debate, what, 45 years ago  
20 about eliminating rail service to the  
21 South Hills in favor of buses, and that  
22 got eventually shot down. We ended up  
23 with the T service.

24                   Just thinking of a couple  
25 alternatives if the Silver Line does get

1 discontinued, which I hope it won't,  
2 consider the possibility of running a bus  
3 from library to get us up to Washington  
4 Junction for a transfer. Perhaps,  
5 alternatively, keep the Lytle Station open  
6 and stop it there. That was --- you know,  
7 some of that was redone recently. Some  
8 way to get us at least onto the tracks  
9 from the library section forward.

10 MR. NICKLOW:

11 One minute remaining.

12 MR. RENO:

13 And then, you know, if all of  
14 that fails or if the line is shut down,  
15 certainly entertain the possibility of  
16 turning that into a rail trail. That way  
17 at least we could walk or bike. For me,  
18 for local shopping, I could walk right  
19 into Bethel Park or bike up and down to  
20 the Montour Trail. So hopefully that  
21 would also be considered.

22 I mean, ideally, if it gets  
23 shut down, we get bus transport to  
24 Washington Junction and a viable biking  
25 and hiking trail there for the rail bed.

1 And that's it for me. Thank you for your  
2 time. I appreciate the chance to talk  
3 today.

4 MODERATOR:

5 Thank you.

6 MR. NICKLOW:

7 Eric Cox. Please state your  
8 name and spell it for the recorder.  
9 You'll have three minutes to speak with a  
10 reminder for one minute remaining.

11 MR. COX:

12 Hello, it's Eric Cox,  
13 E-R-I-C, C-O-X.

14 I'm here today because I do  
15 think we should be supporting the PRT and  
16 investment in it, because without it, it's  
17 just another death of death blow to  
18 Pittsburgh. The city's already dying. I  
19 mean, I just saw the report about  
20 Allegheny County. The area is shrinking.  
21 Without the PRT, it's going to shrink  
22 more. We'll eventually just become a  
23 college town, which I think is kind of  
24 funny considering the universities don't  
25 really contribute that much to public

1 transportation, which I find to be really  
2 a lost opportunity.

3 As you go down 5th and Forbes  
4 here, there's a number of stops that CMU,  
5 Pitt, UPMC take advantage of, yet they  
6 don't really want to contribute that much  
7 to the city. So I don't know why we have  
8 as many stops in that area as we do. We  
9 could put one at one end, one at the  
10 other, and then if the UPMC, Pitt or CMU  
11 would like to contribute to extra bus  
12 stops, there would be an opportunity for  
13 them.

14 I also believe, though, that  
15 we should be looking at fixing the system  
16 that's in place. I use the bus a lot,  
17 multiple times throughout the day. And  
18 there are routes with nobody on them for  
19 long stretches, routes that could be  
20 somehow consolidated in mid parts of the  
21 day to work more efficiently.

22 But I also have one more  
23 concern. We have a big draft coming up  
24 next year and there's been a huge  
25 commitment by the State Department, the

1 city, the area. Two months before the  
2 draft, we're planning on getting rid of  
3 most of this transportation. I'd like to  
4 know all these people that are coming into  
5 the city and are forced to stay on the  
6 outskirts because we don't have enough  
7 rooms, how are they going to get into this  
8 city? Well, they'll probably take public  
9 transportation, but how are they going to  
10 get back out of the city? Because at  
11 11:00 there's not going to be any option  
12 for them except maybe Uber, Lyft. Those  
13 rates are going to be great. It's going  
14 to be a great, great view for those coming  
15 to visit the city. It's going to make  
16 Pittsburgh look really, really great.

17 So this time to shine our  
18 return on investment, it's going to be a  
19 failure because we're not going to have  
20 restaurants and bars open because  
21 employees, they're going to have to leave  
22 early because they're going to have to  
23 catch public transportation home.

24 So I know Shapiro just is  
25 squeezing another 292 and a million into

1 the budget. This will be available next  
2 year. I'm fairly confident of that. But  
3 after the draft, when are we going to fix  
4 it? When are we going to support it?  
5 Because after the draft that money is  
6 going to go away. Are we going to get the  
7 money back to fix the problem or are we  
8 just going to get the money and continue  
9 doing the same thing? Thank you for my  
10 time.

11 MODERATOR:

12 Thank you, Eric.

13 MR. NICKLOW:

14 Nicole Hyslop. Nicole.  
15 Cassandra Masters.

16 To keep from getting ahead,  
17 is there anybody who is registered for a  
18 later time who would like to speak early?

19 Is there anybody who has not  
20 yet registered who would like to speak?

21 When you come down, please  
22 state your name and spell it for the  
23 recorder. You will have three minutes to  
24 speak with a reminder for one minute  
25 remaining. And we would ask you register



1 after you speak.

2 MS. GRINBERG-LIMONC:

3 Hi, my name is Tatiana,  
4 T-A-T-I-A-N-A, Grinberg, G-R-I-N-B-E-R-G,  
5 Limoncic, L-I-M-O-N-C-I-C.

6 I am from the zip code 15206  
7 but I'm originally not from here. I am an  
8 immigrant from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. As  
9 you can see, my English is very, very  
10 close to perfect. And I work at JFCS. I  
11 am a Pitt graduate. I just graduated this  
12 May. And I have a health condition. I am  
13 very, very, very privileged to live five  
14 minutes away from the bus stop from 67 and  
15 69. And that's the route I took every day  
16 to Pitt. And that's what allowed me to  
17 get my degree with very little help from  
18 mobile assistance.

19 And I feel like me personally  
20 because I immigrated here, but everyone  
21 from my organization, it is our duty and  
22 my privilege to be an English speaking  
23 immigrant, to be a abled body for the most  
24 part immigrant, to come here and plea for  
25 the ones that can't be and that can't

1 communicate with you in an effective  
2 manner.

3                   So if I have the honor and  
4 the privilege to do that, I do believe  
5 everyone around me should as well. We  
6 serve a lot of people and a lot of  
7 families that faced extreme conditions in  
8 their home countries. And while I also  
9 have the privilege to be here for my  
10 education and not fleeing, I think once we  
11 get to here to Pittsburgh and to the city  
12 that welcome us, we should be given the  
13 exact same opportunities to thrive. And  
14 if the bus is what it takes, then let's do  
15 it, you know? So yeah. Thank you.

16                   MODERATOR:

17                   Thank you.

18                   MR. NICKLOW:

19                   Is there anybody else who has  
20 not registered yet who would like to  
21 speak?

22                   As a reminder, please state  
23 your name, spell it for the recorder.  
24 You will have three minutes to speak. A  
25 reminder for one minute remaining. And if

1 you haven't registered, please do so  
2 afterwards.

3 MS. SIPLAK:

4 Thank you.

5 My name is Sarah Siplak,  
6 S-A-R-A-H, Siplak, S-I-P-L-A-K. I'm a  
7 resident of 15206.

8 I have a child who goes to  
9 Pittsburgh Public Schools. When he was  
10 attending Kappa, he was given a bus pass  
11 to get to school starting in seventh  
12 grade, which made me very nervous. But  
13 our family is very fortunate that we live  
14 within the city limits. We are a two car  
15 household between my husband and I. Our  
16 son will soon have his license and will  
17 likely get his own car.

18 And I'm not here to speak on  
19 behalf of my family. I'm here to speak on  
20 behalf of the many, many students who  
21 attend Pittsburgh Public Schools and need  
22 the bus to get to and from school. And  
23 their parents need the bus to get to and  
24 from schools for events, to see their  
25 children perform in sports, perform in

1 musicals, things of that nature.

2                   We're so fortunate to live in  
3 an area where we have a very large school  
4 district that allows for students to  
5 commute from long distances to get to  
6 various schools through the Magnet  
7 Program, which is also undergoing a lot of  
8 changes currently, but it makes our region  
9 so vibrant and full of diversity, which is  
10 so important to why we chose to come and  
11 live in this region and live in an area  
12 much larger than the small towns where my  
13 husband and I both grew up.

14                   I know for a fact that we  
15 lose a lot of the young people that come  
16 here to go to school, whether it's for  
17 their original schooling, elementary all  
18 the way through high school, or for  
19 furthering their education. If we don't  
20 have the ability to allow people to live  
21 outside of the city and get to the places  
22 that they need to go, as someone who spoke  
23 earlier said, we're going to lose a lot of  
24 people who rely on this public  
25 transportation.

1 I urge you to think about the  
2 ramifications of these cuts that not only  
3 are affecting the community of families  
4 that my agency works with and many other  
5 agencies, but also families that do not  
6 have the ability to purchase a car and to  
7 drive and to find parking. So please  
8 think about all of the families that have  
9 children that are attending schools and  
10 rely on public transportation. Thank you.

11 MODERATOR:

12 Thank you, Sarah

13 MR. NICKLOW:

14 Nicole Hyslop.

15 Okay.

16 Since we don't have anybody  
17 else registered right this second, if  
18 anybody would like --- remaining would  
19 like to make a second statement, you may  
20 come up.

21 Okay. It looks like we got  
22 someone else who's registered. Sarah  
23 Siplak. I apologize. I think that is  
24 --- people being filled in who did not  
25 register yet.

1                                 - - -  
2   (WHEREUPON, A BRIEF PAUSE WAS HELD.)

3                                 - - -  
4                                 MR. NICKLOW:

5                                 We will now take a break.  
6   We will resume at noon with our next  
7   scheduled speaker. The hearing will go  
8   off recording for this time. Thank you  
9   for your patience.

10                                - - -  
11   (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS HELD.)

12                                - - -  
13                                MR. NICKLOW:

14                                Okay.  
15                                We are ready to now resume  
16   the hearing. A reminder that this session  
17   is being recorded and transcribed by a  
18   court reporter. If you do not wish to be  
19   recorded, please exit the room now.

20                                Each speaker will have three  
21   minutes to provide public comment. When  
22   called please approach the speaker's  
23   table, clearly state your name and spell  
24   it slowly before beginning the recording.

25                                Cassandra Masters.

1                   MS. MASTERS:

2                   Good afternoon. My name is  
3 Cassandra Masters, C-A-S-S-A-N-D-R-A,  
4 Masters, M-A-S-T-E-R-S.

5                   So yes, thank you so much for  
6 providing this opportunity. I am the  
7 Associate Director with Age Friendly  
8 Greater Pittsburgh. We are part of an  
9 international movement started by the  
10 World Health Organization dedicated to  
11 making our region more inclusive and  
12 respectful of all ages.

13                  The World Health Organization  
14 has deemed transportation as a core part  
15 of livability and ensuring that we can all  
16 thrive as we age.

17                  Our region has the second  
18 oldest population that's over the age of  
19 65 when compared to other regions its  
20 size. We're second to Palm Beach,  
21 Florida. I'm not sure what the transit  
22 service in Palm Beach, Florida looks like.  
23 It's probably a little different. But PRT  
24 service is a phenomenal asset for our  
25 growing aging population. We see this

1 population as a unique asset and an  
2 opportunity so long as we build  
3 communities for it.

4                   We hear the term aging in  
5 place, but what we advocate for is aging  
6 in community. For the most part, older  
7 people do not want to age in place or in  
8 their living room. None of us do. We  
9 don't want to be confined to our homes.  
10 We want to participate in the communities  
11 that we call home and we want to make our  
12 own decisions and exercise choice. That  
13 is not possible without transportation  
14 access.

15                   These cuts would dramatically  
16 impact quality of life for our neighbors.  
17 All six of our age friendly neighborhoods,  
18 for example, would see a major reduction  
19 in PRT service. And this spans the county  
20 and demographics. Coraopolis, McKeesport,  
21 Sharpsburg, the Hill District, Clairton,  
22 Beechview. Cuts in these communities  
23 would mean loss. Loss of economic  
24 opportunity, loss of social ties, and yes,  
25 even loss of life due to the social



1 isolation that being forced to stay at  
2 home would bring.

3 ACCESS specifically provides  
4 about one million trips a year across the  
5 County. And for many people with  
6 disabilities, ACCESS is their transit.  
7 Please protect the service area, the ADA  
8 minimum service area.

9 Please also fight to cap the  
10 fares at the current top fare level of  
11 \$5.25. Many of the riders that use ACCESS  
12 are barely affording that and they simply  
13 will not afford anything higher than that.  
14 Even if people could afford other options,  
15 there are not many accessible options out  
16 there. Uber and Lyft do not have  
17 accessible transportation options. We  
18 need to protect accessible transit.

19 I also want to raise that  
20 many people think about ACCESS in terms of  
21 the medical trips that they provide, which  
22 is of course critical. But what people  
23 often don't know about ACCESS is all the  
24 other trip purposes that they provide.  
25 Work, grocery stores, senior centers,

1 public parks, birthday parties, funerals,  
2 mental health treatment, and even PNC  
3 Park. We recently took a group of 40  
4 Coraopolis residents to PNC Park using  
5 ACCESS, and many of the people who went  
6 hadn't been there in 20 years.

7 All of these trips are  
8 essential. We cannot cut service in a way  
9 that only supports medical trips. We need  
10 to protect all types of trips.

11 I want everyone to imagine if  
12 the only time you left your house was to  
13 go to a medical appointment. That is my  
14 grandma's experience in rural Pennsylvania  
15 because she doesn't have access to public  
16 transportation. That is what would happen  
17 if access service was cut and fares went  
18 up.

19 Public transit is not just  
20 nice to have, it's an essential need, like  
21 access to clean water and electricity.  
22 Investing in PRT and access means  
23 investing in our health, our economy, our  
24 communities, and our quality of life  
25 across the lifespan. Thank you.

1                   MODERATOR:

2                   Thank you, Cassandra.

3                   MR. NICKLOW:

4                   Anna Fato. Can you come up,  
5 please? State your name and spell it  
6 slowly and clearly for the reporter. You  
7 will have three minutes to speak and a  
8 reminder at one minute to go.

9                   MS. FATO:

10                  How many minutes did you say  
11 to speak? I'm sorry.

12                  MR. NICKLOW:

13                  Three minutes.

14                  MS. FATO:

15                  Three minutes. Okay.

16                  Better be fast. Hi, I'm Anna  
17 Fato. Anna Maria Fato, proud Italian  
18 immigrant in America. Came to Pittsburgh  
19 when I was three years old. I am here  
20 today because I live nearby. I could walk  
21 over from North Belfield Avenue and La  
22 Condo.

23                  I came home June 30th of last  
24 year to help with the care of my mother  
25 who sadly has dementia. I came home after

1 14 years in Zurich, Switzerland. That's  
2 why I'm here today.

3 I'm a 20 year veteran of  
4 General Motors. My last year as a GM, I  
5 had a new company car every three months  
6 fully paid for by the company. I have  
7 living - - - I have been living 14 years in  
8 Zurich, Switzerland without a car.

9 I paid for a garage the first  
10 18 months because I thought I was going to  
11 get a car. I love cars. I always had a  
12 car. And then after 18 months I'm like,  
13 why am I paying for this expensive garage  
14 in this expensive city? And I'm not using  
15 it. So I gave it up and I stayed without  
16 a car.

17 When people ask me what do I  
18 miss the most of living in Europe, I don't  
19 say the chocolates or the Alps. I say the  
20 public transportation system.

21 And I'm here by myself. I  
22 have no children, never married, sadly.  
23 I always say the man upstairs had another  
24 plan for me that I never understood.

25 But anyway, I had to go to

1 the airport for the first time. So I went  
2 to see this 28X, you know, this Airport  
3 Flyer. How fast can I get there? I could  
4 be at the airport in Zurich to the  
5 Hopbannhof, the main train station, in  
6 nine minutes when I would land in Zurich.  
7 And I found it takes about roughly an hour  
8 to get to the airport with 28 stops I  
9 think it is. Twenty four (24), excuse me,  
10 24 stops.

11 So I've been making some  
12 comments on LinkedIn when I see some posts  
13 about the new airport, like when are we  
14 going to have an electric train or high  
15 speed service, please, to the airport?  
16 Like half an hour or less. Why 24 stops?  
17 Why does it have to go to Robinson Town  
18 Center where people have to shop?

19 MR. NICKLOW:

20 One minute.

21 MS. FATO:

22 Thank you.

23 So you're looking at a baby  
24 boomer. My niece, all my friends, young  
25 kids all tell me that they --- the one ---

1 they've all left. One's in England, one's  
2 in Montreal. They cannot live in a city  
3 without good public transportation because  
4 they're experiencing it. You're looking  
5 at a baby boomer who's saying the same  
6 thing.

7                   So when you get used to  
8 public transportation, it is amazing. It  
9 doesn't mean we stop buying cars, it  
10 doesn't mean we don't love cars. But we  
11 know when to use cars, when not to use  
12 them. And going to the airport here in  
13 Pittsburgh, you know, I really would love  
14 to have a real Airport Flyer that can get  
15 me there in half an hour to and a half an  
16 hour back. A special lane. I was  
17 looking, as my friend was driving me to  
18 the airport last week to go to Montreal.  
19 I was looking at this one area. I said,  
20 here's a perfect spot for a lane of  
21 something.

22                   Stadler Train Swiss, let's  
23 get them here. They're doing that in  
24 Chicago and other cities. Let's just not  
25 reinvent the wheel. Let's look at what

1 other cities in America are doing and  
2 let's bring a little bit of the Swiss  
3 precision and efficiency and timeliness  
4 here too. Because this is a great city  
5 and I'm here because I care. Thank you.

6 MODERATOR:

7 Thank you.

8 MR. NICKLOW:

9 Shawn Pastor.

10 When you come down, please  
11 state your name and spell it clearly and  
12 slowly for the recorder. You'll have  
13 three minutes to speak. We will give you  
14 a warning at one minute to go.

15 MR. PASTOR:

16 Shawn Pastor, S-H-A-W-N,  
17 P-A-S-T-O-R.

18 I'm actually here because the  
19 Red Line does not have enough service.  
20 They have --- they had service, but it got  
21 cut. I honestly, I have to take other  
22 options like 38, 36 and 41. Those routes  
23 are going to be cut. I can't have that.

24 It's way too ridiculous how  
25 that Red Line gets packed with people.

1 The 36, 38, 41 does not. That's why the  
2 ridership levels on those routes are low  
3 because no one's riding it. We cannot  
4 afford to have those routes eliminated or  
5 cut because people rely on them,  
6 especially in Green Tree and in Mount  
7 Lebanon and South Hills Village.

8 That 36 of South Hills  
9 Village, it's not good with ridership.  
10 We can't --- we cannot have that 36 also  
11 eliminated because people utilize that to  
12 go to the mall from Banksville. That's  
13 their only option. And if you cut that  
14 36, it's over for them. It's going to be  
15 a lot of people upset. And if that is not  
16 taken care of, there's going to be a lot  
17 of people upset citywide, with all these  
18 routes are going to be cut citywide.  
19 It's not --- this is --- it's not good.

20 I grew up in 1994. The  
21 systems back then were --- the system back  
22 then was fantastic. You had 24 hour  
23 service. You had tons --- you had tons of  
24 service, tons of connections. What are we  
25 --- what are we doing? I mean, seriously,



1 what are we doing? The system back then  
2 was thriving with service. Now, nothing.

3 MR. NICKLOW:

4 One minute remaining.

5 MR. PASTOR:

6 It's not even close to what  
7 we had in the past. We can't keep doing  
8 this. We cannot keep having service cut  
9 like this. Please don't do this to us.  
10 Because we use the service. We utilize it  
11 every single day. It's not good. We  
12 can't. We can't have that.

13 So please, please do not cut  
14 any more service. Get the funding, keep  
15 the funding. Don't spend it on stupid  
16 stuff. Keep the funding. Keep it for  
17 stuff that we need, not the stuff that's  
18 being spent on a BRT project that we ---  
19 there's no need for it. Cleveland needs  
20 it because they don't have any other  
21 option. We don't have that. We have all  
22 these other --- we have all this service  
23 in Oakland. We have all this service in  
24 Squirrel Hill. We do not need a BRT to  
25 make it better.

1                   The BRT, it's for other  
2 cities. LA has it. We don't need that.  
3 We just don't. We don't need none of  
4 that. We need to keep the service how it  
5 is. We need to seriously look at the  
6 bigger picture here. Thank you.

7                   MODERATOR:

8                   Thank you, Shawn.

9                   MR. NICKLOW:

10                  Karen Smith.

11                  When you come down, please  
12 state your name slowly and clearly and  
13 spell it. You will have three minutes to  
14 speak. We will give you a reminder at one  
15 minute to go.

16                  MS. SMITH:

17                  Karen Smith, K-A-R-E-N,  
18 S-M-I-T-H.

19                  We can't do the job with half  
20 the tools. We have the buses and the  
21 people now. We need to receive the  
22 reliable, dedicated funding. We should  
23 not have to pick up the pieces of a once  
24 thriving system that should never have  
25 been let to fall apart in the first place.

1                   We should not be left  
2 stranded by a system that is needed by all  
3 now and always. Don't leave us stranded.  
4 Please fund public transit. This money is  
5 needed more now than ever before.

6                   Even though the pandemic  
7 killed some of it, we cannot let that  
8 damper our spirits and our drive to get  
9 what is needed to keep people connected  
10 far and wide, whether it be in Allegheny  
11 County, Washington County, Beaver County,  
12 any county in Pennsylvania, in  
13 Philadelphia and all over the other  
14 states, we are all in it together. If we  
15 can't work together to get what is needed,  
16 it's going to fall apart even worse than  
17 it is now.

18                   We don't need band aids. We  
19 need permanent, reliable, dedicated  
20 funding for something that is needed for  
21 now and in the future. You may be able to  
22 drive a car now, but who's to say in ten  
23 years you may not be? And you, yourself  
24 might be relying on the bus. And if it's  
25 not fixed now, who's to say you're going

1 to have that bus in ten years when you  
2 need it?

3 MR. NICKLOW:

4 One minute remaining.

5 MS. SMITH:

6 So please fund public transit  
7 for all who is needing it now and forever.  
8 Thank you.

9 MODERATOR:

10 Thank you, Karen.

11 MR. NICKLOW:

12 Renee Wright.

13 You can come on up, Renee.  
14 When you come up, please state your name  
15 and spell it clearly and slowly for the  
16 recorder. You will have three minutes to  
17 speak. We will give you a reminder at one  
18 minute to go.

19 MS. WRIGHT: Renee Wright,  
20 spelled, R-E-N-E-E, W-R-I-G-H-T. My ZIP  
21 code is 15218.

22 So it's important to maintain  
23 lines through all city neighborhoods and  
24 surrounding boroughs for commuters and  
25 others that rely on public transit as

1 their only means of transportation to get  
2 to work, stores and appointments.

3 But actually today I wanted  
4 to speak from the perspective of other  
5 riders like me that mostly used public  
6 transit more for leisure activities. And  
7 cutting off service at 11:00 p.m. will  
8 have an adverse impact on getting around  
9 the city for these recreational activities  
10 and also the service workers that work at  
11 restaurants and different venues  
12 throughout the city.

13 When the initial bus line  
14 redesign was first announced, I read an  
15 article that quoted a PRT representative  
16 in saying that it was not only to service  
17 underserved neighborhoods for those that  
18 relied on public transit because they  
19 don't own vehicles, but also to increase  
20 ridership for those that do own vehicles.  
21 But now with these new proposed cuts,  
22 that's counterintuitive to that initial  
23 idea with cutting off service at 11:00  
24 p.m.

25 Since moving to Pittsburgh

1 around four years ago, I actually have  
2 never driven Downtown. But I do own a  
3 car. But I go Downtown very often,  
4 especially on the weekends and sometimes  
5 during the weekdays. I just choose not to  
6 use my car so I don't have to deal with  
7 the traffic, pay the exorbitant parking  
8 fees, try to find parking, or technically  
9 have to worry about driving after maybe  
10 having a couple cocktails.

11 When I am Downtown, I also  
12 visit other areas such as the Strip or the  
13 North Side and either walk there or take  
14 transfers from the bus or the trains  
15 respectively, depending on where I'm  
16 going. And often on those trains,  
17 especially going to sporting events,  
18 they're filled with other fans going to  
19 these events as well. And as you know,  
20 sometimes with sporting events you can't  
21 guarantee that they're going to end at  
22 10:00 or 10:30, especially going into  
23 overtime.

24 MR. NICKLOW:

25 One minute remaining.

1                   MS. WRIGHT:

2                   Thank you.

3                   So I think this will have an  
4   adverse effect on these different cultural  
5   events or venues. And many cultural  
6   groups are already struggling with  
7   subscribers and are trying to offer  
8   different incentives like free Uber rides  
9   and such. But it would be obviously more  
10  beneficial to have these public transit  
11  services available to people after 11:00.

12                  And I also just think again  
13  about all the service workers working in  
14  Downtown and other neighborhoods that  
15  maybe can't guarantee that they're going  
16  to be done working to catch that 11:00  
17  bus. And how is that going to affect them  
18  being able to find employment.

19                  But also these businesses,  
20  especially the small businesses and local  
21  owned businesses that are already  
22  struggling trying to find service workers,  
23  it's going to limit the pool of potential  
24  applicants even more.

25                  So in conclusion, I just feel

1 we actually need a more robust public  
2 transit system, not a downsized system to  
3 support the people that already live here,  
4 but also to attract new people and  
5 businesses to our area as well.

6 And just kind of put as a  
7 last thought, just think about what's  
8 going to happen when we have the NFL draft  
9 here and we have all these visitors to our  
10 city that maybe are flying in or taking  
11 other transit means to get here and won't  
12 have vehicles and actually want to really  
13 utilize all the services in our city.  
14 Thank you.

15 MODERATOR:

16 Thank you, Renee.

17 MR. NICKLOW:

18 Rebecca McTaggart.

19 Anybody else registered to  
20 speak at a later time that would like to  
21 speak early, you're welcome to come up.

22 Anybody who has not yet  
23 registered to speak that would like to  
24 come up.

25 - - -



1 (WHEREUPON, A BRIEF PAUSE WAS HELD.)

2 - - -

3 MR. NICKLOW:

4 I'd like to check again if  
5 anybody has not registered who would like  
6 to speak or who has registered for a later  
7 time who would like to speak early.

8 - - -

9 (WHEREUPON, A BRIEF PAUSE WAS HELD.)

10 - - -

11 MR. NICKLOW:

12 I'd like to make one more  
13 call for anybody who has not received  
14 registered and would like to speak or who  
15 has registered for a later time and  
16 willing to speak early.

17 - - -

18 (WHEREUPON, A BRIEF PAUSE WAS HELD.)

19 - - -

20 MR. NICKLOW:

21 It is now 1:00 p.m. As  
22 publicly advertised. We will now take a  
23 break and go off the record from 1:00 pm  
24 to 3:00 p.m. This public hearing will  
25 resume at 3:00 p.m. Thank you.

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HEARING CONCLUDED AT 1:00 P.M.

\* \* \* \* \*

## CERTIFICATE

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I hereby certify, as the  
stenographic reporter, that the foregoing  
proceedings were taken stenographically by  
me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting  
by me or under my direction; and that this  
transcript is a true and accurate record to  
the best of my ability.

Dated the 20th day of May, 2025



Chelsea Curry,

Court Reporter

# Public Hearing 2

**Date: 5/6/2025**

**Location: Soldiers and Sailors**

**Room: Main**

**Time: Afternoon**

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED  
SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND FARE INCREASE

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: BEN NICKLOW,  
Hearing Moderator  
Katherine Kelleman, Member  
Tom Burgunder, Member  
Lindsey Williams, Member  
Charles Reeves, Member  
Amy Silbermann, Member  
Donminika Brown, Member  
Don Rivetti, Member  
Jim Ritchie, Member  
Inez Colon, Member  
Mike Cetra, Member  
HEARING: Tuesday, May 6, 2025  
3:00 p.m.

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by the certifying agency.

LOCATION: Soldiers & Sailors  
Memorial Museum  
4141 Fifth Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
WITNESSES: None offered

Reporter: Chelsea Curry

## A P P E A R A N C E S

ALSO PRESENT:

|                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| NANCY              | ERIC SEVERSON     |
| LINDA WARMAN       | LEA BRIDI         |
| JACOB SCHMIDLAPP   | JUSTIN HSIEH      |
| KATHY UJHAZY       | ROSS NICOTERO     |
| RAMAKRISHNAN MOHAN | NATASHA MATULEVIC |
| SYDNEY GREENWAY    |                   |
| STAN COVERT        |                   |
| MCKINLEY SCONIERS  |                   |
| DONALD BROSNECK    |                   |
| CHRISTY KUEHN      |                   |
| PATRICK CONNERS    |                   |
| LINDA MARZEC       |                   |
| GEORGE KARPACS     |                   |
| RYAN MATTHEWS      |                   |
| VIRGINIA WHITE     |                   |
| ABIGAIL ZIMMERMAN  |                   |
| KRISTEN GREENE     |                   |
| BRIAN HATGELAKAS   |                   |
| JORDAN TSIGAS      |                   |
| ALAN GARGER        |                   |
| ROBERT HELWIG      |                   |
| DOROTHY SHERMAN    |                   |

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I N D E X

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| DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES | 408 - 501 |
| CERTIFICATE              | 502       |



## E X H I B I T S

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|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
|               | NONE OFFERED       |                         |

## P R O C E E D I N G S

ATTORNEY CETRA:

To order. As a reminder, this hearing is being recorded and transcribed by a Court Reporter. So if you do not want to be recorded, please exit the hearing room now.

A couple additional reminders. Each speaker has up to three minutes to provide public comment, and should come up to the speaker's table when called upon and state their name clearly and spell it for the Court Reporter before beginning to provide your public comment.

Additionally, the purpose of this public hearing is for PRT and ACCESS representatives to receive public comments. So, our staff will be listening to your comments, but we will not be answering questions or actively responding to your comments. Any questions, or if you want additional

1 information on the proposed service  
2 reductions and fare increases, we do  
3 have PRT staff members stationed  
4 outside the hearing room, and you can  
5 see them with any questions.

6 So with that, we will go  
7 ahead and call up our next speaker.

8 MR. NICKLOW:

9 Next on our list is Linda  
10 Warman. Linda, if you're present,  
11 please make your way to the speaker's  
12 table.

13 MS. WARMAN:

14 Is this working?

15 MR. NICKLOW:

16 Yes, you should be good.

17 MS. WARMAN:

18 Okay.

19 My name's Linda Warman,  
20 L-I-N-D-A W-A-R-M-A-N. I emphasize on  
21 the spelling, sorry.

22 I'm Linda from Duquesne,  
23 the side of town that's nearest  
24 Kennywood. I ride the 59, the 53, the  
25 61C, and the 55N. And I live in the

1 Parkview Manor Apartments Hilltop  
2 Complex, which we have done. Now, I've  
3 take --- I've taken public transit all  
4 over. I also have all sorts of  
5 appointments like cardiologist, PCP,  
6 foot doctor, diabetic. And if I can  
7 get to an event like a ball game,  
8 that's if the tickets are low enough  
9 for me to afford.

10 But anyway, when I also  
11 have my caregiver with me, she rides  
12 the bus too, and she's never rode ---  
13 until she met me, she's never rode a  
14 bus. But we have been there.

15 Now, I have also noticed  
16 that there's a lot of buses being cut  
17 completely, like the Trafford, the  
18 Bower Hill, the 53L, which I've taken a  
19 lot of times. And I could run out of  
20 breath reading the whole list, believe  
21 me. But, we are in danger. Those  
22 residents and as well as other  
23 communities are running --- are going  
24 to wind up losing their lifelines.  
25 Because they can't, some --- most of

1       those people that ride buses currently,  
2       that I noticed, don't have a car.  
3       Don't have anybody to help them get  
4       around, and that's not good.

5                       But what I'm asking you  
6       guys to do is to urge our state reps  
7       and our state senate, also if we can  
8       get the Congress down in D.C. to also  
9       look our way. We're just asking you  
10      guys to help us, us residents of  
11      Pennsylvania, to actually get some  
12      attention here for our transit. Not  
13      just for the Philadelphia side and all  
14      the little guys in between, but also  
15      for Pittsburgh, because we get the  
16      shaft most of the times.

17                      But what I'm saying is,  
18      we need dedicated funding, not another  
19      band aid. Because we shouldn't have to  
20      pick up the pieces of the public  
21      transit system that was once a very  
22      thriving system. And even as today,  
23      should not be allowed to fall apart.  
24      So, we need this bus. We need the  
25      buses. We do not have a choice

1        anymore.    We need them.    Thank you.

2                    MR. NICKLOW:

3                    Next on our list is Jacob  
4        Schmidlapp.    Jacob, if you're present,  
5        please make your way to the speaker's  
6        table.

7                    MR. SCHMIDLAPP:

8                    Good afternoon, ladies  
9        and gentlemen of the panel.    Name's  
10       Jacob Schmidlapp, S-C-H-M-I-D-L-A-P-P.

11                   I'd like to begin with,  
12       I'm certainly an outlier here that I  
13       have dependable transportation on my  
14       own.    However, I am --- certainly  
15       attempt, if at all possible, to take  
16       public transportation, if at all  
17       feasible.    No matter how long it takes,  
18       I like to drive --- ride on Port  
19       Authority.

20                   That said, as the  
21       previous speaker mentioned, our system  
22       had been at one time thriving all over  
23       the county.    Several cuts later, there  
24       are entire townships that, such as Pine  
25       Township.    I routinely go for athletics

1 up there. I cannot get to Pine  
2 Township. No matter how hard I try, I  
3 can't do it. Go to McCandless and take  
4 a cab.

5 And that said, even with  
6 further cuts, certainly as draconian as  
7 the ones I've read in this pamphlet are  
8 cutting service up to 50 percent and  
9 leaving dozens of other townships  
10 completely unserved, is - - - would then  
11 create cascading cutbacks. No further  
12 people can take the bus? Well, then  
13 ridership's down. Oh, we cut funding  
14 because ridership's down. Less  
15 funding, less buses. Round and round  
16 we go, and we may not have transit in  
17 the next 20 years at all.

18 That's - - - that's about  
19 it. That, yeah. Ridership's already  
20 dwindling from what it was ten years  
21 ago. Ten more years, we won't - - - may  
22 not have any. And certainly for the  
23 rest of the people who are dependent on  
24 it, they can't get to their doctor's  
25 appointments at all, never mind twice

1 as long as it takes now. Basic travel  
2 would be impossible. That's all.  
3 Thank you much.

4 MR. NICKLOW:

5 Thank you, Jacob. Next  
6 on our list is Stan Covert. Stan, if  
7 you're present, please make your way to  
8 the speaker's table. Stan Covert?

9 Patrick Conners?

10 MR. CONNERS:

11 So I'm actually waiting  
12 for a colleague. She should be here in  
13 about 20 minutes. I scheduled myself  
14 for 4:25, but they said they'll shift  
15 me up earlier. So if I can wait until  
16 3:30.

17 MR. NICKLOW:

18 That's fine.

19 MR. CONNERS:

20 Perfect, thanks.

21 MR. NICKLOW:

22 Is there anyone else who  
23 is scheduled to speak at a later time  
24 that would like to speak now? Is there  
25 anyone in the audience who is not



1 registered, but would like to speak now  
2 and register after?

3 - - -

4 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
5 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

6 - - -

7 MR. NICKLOW:

8 Next on our list is Stan  
9 Covert. Stan, if you're available,  
10 please make your way to the speaker's  
11 table.

12 If there is anyone in  
13 attendance who is registered to speak  
14 at a later time and would like to do so  
15 now, please make your way to the  
16 speaker's table. If there is anyone in  
17 attendance who has not registered.

18 As a reminder, you have  
19 three minutes for your public comment.  
20 And to help our Court Reporter, please  
21 state your full name and spell it  
22 slowly and clearly before you begin  
23 speaking.

24 MS. UJHAZY:

25 Hi, my name is Kathy

1 Ujhazy, U-J-H-A-Z-Y.

2 Hi. I have three Pitt  
3 students. One's going to med school in  
4 the fall, and I have a rising senior,  
5 and I have a rising sophomore who's  
6 with me, and specifically my youngest  
7 here. We are from the west area. We  
8 live in Moon, and he was 16 when he was  
9 hired at the Target in Moon Township.  
10 And he loves that job. And he chose to  
11 go to Pitt instead of Penn State  
12 because he could take the 28X bus from  
13 here to Target every weekend and work  
14 while he was attending school.

15 So that was actually the  
16 only reason why he chose Pitt over Penn  
17 State, because the program at Penn  
18 State was a little bit stronger than  
19 what he's studying. But his job was  
20 important to him. So reducing either  
21 the 28X that would go to IKEA or the 29  
22 bus that goes to Robinson, for him as a  
23 student, would really affect him. The  
24 convenience of it and the safety of it,  
25 I don't want him transferring downtown,

1       early or late, and different things.

2               So I don't know if you  
3       guys know, but my husband's a pilot for  
4       Delta. And those 28X buses can be  
5       really full, and they're a good service  
6       to the airport, but they're also really  
7       filled with people working in that area  
8       in Robinson. So I'm here just to  
9       represent that sort of area.

10              I also teach at Robert  
11       Morris, so I know a lot of my students  
12       take it. They'll park their cars at  
13       IKEA and different things for different  
14       reasons. But that's all I want to  
15       address today.

16              MR. NICKLOW:

17              Thank you, Kathy.

18              Stan Covert. Stan, if  
19       you're present, please make your way to  
20       the speaker's table.

21              If there's anyone who is  
22       scheduled to speak later and would like  
23       to do so now, please make your way up  
24       to the speaker's table. If there's  
25       anyone here who is not registered to

1 speak, but would like to do so, please  
2 make your way to the speaker's table.

3 - - -

4 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
5 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

6 - - -

7 MR. NICKLOW:

8 If anyone in the audience  
9 is registered to speak at a later time  
10 and would like to do so now, you may  
11 step up to the speaker's table.

12 As a reminder, you have  
13 three minutes for your public comment.  
14 And to help our Court Reporter, please  
15 state your full name and spell it  
16 slowly and clearly before you begin  
17 speaking.

18 MR. MOHAN:

19 Hi. My full name is  
20 Ramakrishnan Mohan. It's R-A-M-A-K-R-  
21 I-S-H-N-A-N. Last name is spelled M-O-  
22 H-A-N. I just go by Krish.

23 I work at Chartiers  
24 Center. We are a behavioral health,  
25 IDD, and housing nonprofit based out in

1 Bridgeville. And we polled our  
2 consumers to see how this cut and bus  
3 elimination is going to impact them.  
4 And what we found is that a lot of our  
5 mobile clients who are in our case  
6 management programs and in our more  
7 intensive housing programs are going to  
8 be the ones that are most affected.  
9 We're looking at upwards of 57 to 75  
10 percent of folks who are using public  
11 transportation on a regular basis to go  
12 to work, and even higher than that to  
13 get treatment, particularly from us or  
14 from other providers across Allegheny  
15 County.

16 So, to us folks in the  
17 mental health world, we see that as a  
18 major barrier to folks that have come  
19 really, really far, especially after a  
20 major pandemic that has affected so  
21 many people's mental health. People  
22 that have been able to keep stable  
23 income, stable housing, been able to do  
24 social and recreational things to help  
25 improve their recovery. This cut is

1       going to impact them negatively in a  
2       pretty substantial way, and possibly  
3       even increase the homeless population  
4       that we see in Pittsburgh today. Make  
5       the housing crisis a little bit worse  
6       than what it already is.

7                       So, I don't know how - - -  
8       how much that this can kind of change,  
9       but we would hope that better access to  
10      public transportation and more  
11      frequency of buses in the future will  
12      help. And because it'll definitely  
13      help our consumers. Thank you.

14                     MR. NICKLOW:

15                     Thank you. Thank you.

16                     If anyone is present and  
17      is registered to speak at a later time  
18      and would like to do so, please make  
19      your way to the speaker's table. If  
20      anyone has not registered to speak and  
21      would like to do so, please make your  
22      way to the speaker's table.

23                     As a reminder, you have  
24      three minutes for your public comment.  
25      And to help our Court Reporter, please

1 state your full name, and spell it  
2 slowly and clearly before you begin  
3 speaking.

4 MS. GREENWAY:

5 Great. Hi, my name is  
6 Sydney Greenway, S-Y-D-N-E-Y.  
7 Greenway, G-R-E-E-N-W-A-Y.

8 I wanted to share that  
9 I'm a part of a large group of Pitt  
10 students who are passionate about  
11 public transit, passionate about  
12 mobility, and urban planning. And we,  
13 in general, are concerned about how the  
14 funding crisis will change our access  
15 to different parts of the city. Many  
16 of our students did not - - - do not have  
17 a car on campus because we're students,  
18 but also because we're passionate about  
19 using alternative modes of  
20 transportation for the environment.  
21 For, you know, just enjoying the city.

22 And I wanted to share  
23 that many of our members have been  
24 canvassing businesses and putting up  
25 flyers. We have been meeting with

1 state representatives and writing to  
2 our legislators. And we're meeting  
3 with Pitt administration to do  
4 everything in their power to support  
5 PRT through this funding crisis, and  
6 hopefully return funding or grow  
7 funding to you as an organization.

8 And I just wanted to say  
9 for the record that we know  
10 transportation is importantly a right.  
11 People should have the right to move  
12 through the city, in --- throughout the  
13 city for jobs, for housing, for medical  
14 services, et cetera. And it's also an  
15 amenity that impacts people's decision  
16 to move to Pittsburgh and also to stay  
17 in the area.

18 And so, for the future of  
19 Pittsburgh, it's vital that we restore  
20 or maintain these services and ensure  
21 that they do not drop. Growing them  
22 back would be just so difficult. And  
23 so, yeah, that's just what I wanted to  
24 share. Thank you.

25 MR. NICKLOW:



1 Thank you, Sydney.

2 Next on our list is Stan  
3 Covert. Stan, if you're present,  
4 please make your way to the speaker's  
5 table. And as a reminder, you have  
6 three minutes for your public comment.  
7 To help our Court Reporter, please  
8 state your full name, and spell it  
9 slowly and clearly before you begin  
10 speaking.

11 MR. COVERT:

12 Good afternoon,  
13 everybody. My name's Stan Covert for  
14 the record.

15 I am a resident of York  
16 Commons. We're located at Penn Avenue  
17 and 40th Street on the borderline of  
18 Bloomfield, Lawrenceville. And I'm  
19 here to speak on behalf of those  
20 residents who use ACCESS. And a lot of  
21 them use ACCESS. They don't want to  
22 see that service get cut or their fares  
23 go up.

24 Also, I'm speaking on  
25 behalf of those residents who use

1 public transit like myself, as I'm  
2 still able to get on the bus, okay?  
3 And public transit means to me is it's  
4 a valued asset to all of our  
5 communities, not just here in Allegheny  
6 County, but Beaver, Washington. Let's  
7 go far east to Philadelphia, all right?

8 And I was an activist for  
9 public transit for 12 years. And I was  
10 with Save Our Transit for nine of those  
11 12 years. And Linda was part of us,  
12 okay? And you know what? Our mission  
13 was dedicated funding. And we bend our  
14 backs. We went to Harrisburg a lot.  
15 We talked to senators and  
16 representatives, we even went to county  
17 council. And it's like, look, public  
18 transit is a valued asset. It's ---  
19 it's not luxury. It's a necessity.  
20 And if these cuts go through, then look  
21 out. I'll tell you what's going to  
22 happen.

23 It's going to feed into  
24 inflation. Inflation right now is four  
25 years old, and prices at the grocery

1 stores have gone up. And everything  
2 from foods to cleaning supplies,  
3 toiletry supplies. And I got this  
4 paper right here. It says bus service  
5 could see major cuts. The 89 that goes  
6 up to Garfield there. And they don't  
7 want to see cuts up there. But also, I  
8 know people that still ride the 71A  
9 Negley that still go to work. They  
10 want to see that bus go right back into  
11 downtown because this past winter, it  
12 was brutal. And they would have to get  
13 off at Oakland and stand there and wait  
14 anywhere up to half an hour to get on  
15 another bus to go into downtown to  
16 work. And what happens is, if these  
17 cuts go through, it will - - - will feed  
18 into inflation.

19 And how are these people  
20 going to get to work? How are they  
21 going to get home if there's no service  
22 after 11 o'clock, let alone they start  
23 at 5:00 or 5:30 or six o'clock and  
24 there's no service? You see, I don't  
25 want to see service cuts. I know you

1       guys don't want to cut the service, but  
2       it starts at the county level, and I  
3       haven't heard much about that.

4                You know, in order to get  
5       the money, the county has to match the  
6       state for you guys to prevent this cut  
7       from happening. What needs to happen  
8       now is Pittsburghers for Public Transit  
9       need to go to Harrisburg and have a  
10      meeting with the governor, and - - - and  
11      say, look. We want this bill for life  
12      this time. Because if it ain't for  
13      life, it's another band aid. Another  
14      band aid.

15               Thanks for allowing me to  
16      share. Good luck, keep our fingers  
17      crossed, and pray that cuts will not  
18      happen.

19               MR. NICKLOW:

20               Thank you, Stan.  
21      Appreciate you coming in today and  
22      providing us your comment.

23               Next on our list is Mary  
24      Ann Merranko. Mary, if you're present,  
25      please make your way to the speaker's

1 table. Mary Ann Merranko.

2 McKinley Sconiers. As a  
3 reminder, you have three minutes for  
4 your public comment. And to help our  
5 Court Reporter, please state your full  
6 name again, and spell it slowly and  
7 clearly before you begin speaking.

8 MS. SCONIERS:

9 My name is McKinley  
10 Sconiers, M-C-K-I-N-L-E-Y S-C-O-N-I-E-  
11 R-S.

12 And so, I am not  
13 originally from Pittsburgh, but about  
14 three years ago, I wanted a change of  
15 scenery. I wanted to move out of my  
16 hometown, and I ended up choosing to  
17 move to Pittsburgh. And a large part  
18 of that reason was because of the  
19 public transit in the city. I don't  
20 have a car. I don't want to own a car.  
21 I like having, like, having public  
22 transportation as my main mode of  
23 transportation. And I turned down many  
24 other cities in this country because  
25 Pittsburgh does have one of the best

1 public transit systems in this country.

2 And I think it would be  
3 so sad to see it all get cut the way it  
4 has been proposed to be cut. There's a  
5 lot of businesses that I go to in,  
6 like, Swissvale and Bellevue and the  
7 South Hills that I exclusively take the  
8 bus to that I cannot access any other  
9 way. I can bike. I can't bike there  
10 without the bus. So, there's a lot of  
11 businesses that I, and I'm sure many  
12 other people, won't be able to go to.

13 I'm lucky enough that I  
14 work here in Oakland, and I can take  
15 the bus here. But all the people who  
16 live in those areas that, Bellevue and  
17 other areas, that can't get here  
18 anymore, based on the bus, I don't know  
19 how they're going to get here. And  
20 there's also already no parking here in  
21 Oakland. So, the idea of everyone  
22 having more cars also doesn't make  
23 sense and is not sustainable.

24 So, I think in a lot of  
25 ways, these proposed cuts, for me

1 personally, are really sad for, based  
2 on why I moved to the city. And I  
3 think they're going to have a lot of  
4 negative effects on the people who all  
5 --- people who have moved here, but  
6 also the people who have grown up here  
7 and rely on the transportation. So,  
8 thank you.

9 MR. NICKLOW:

10 Thank you.

11 Next on our list is Mary  
12 Ann Merranko. Mary, if you're present,  
13 please make your way to the speaker's  
14 table.

15 Mark Schramm.

16 If there is anyone in the  
17 audience who is registered to speak at  
18 a later time and would like to do so  
19 now, you may wait --- make your way up  
20 to the speaker's table. If there is  
21 anyone who is yet to register and would  
22 like to speak, you may make your way up  
23 to the speaker's table now.

24 ---

25 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING

1 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

2 - - -

3 MR. NICKLOW:

4 As a reminder, if there  
5 is anyone in the audience who is  
6 registered to speak at a different time  
7 and would like to do so now, you can  
8 make your way up to the speaker's  
9 table. And if there is anyone who is  
10 not registered to speak, but would like  
11 to do so, you may make your way up to  
12 the speaker's table at this time.

13 MR. BROSNECK:

14 Hi. Hello. Yeah, so I'm  
15 - - - I'm - - - I pretty much ride public  
16 transportation everywhere, you know.  
17 So, like, I don't know, I could see it  
18 sort of having - - -.

19 MR. NICKLOW:

20 Excuse me, sir. Can you  
21 state your name for us?

22 MR. BROSNECK:

23 I'm Donald. Donald  
24 Brosneck. I'm not on the list. You  
25 said if there's anybody that wasn't.



1                   MR. NICKLOW:

2                   Oh, no, absolutely. We  
3 just want to make sure we have you for  
4 the record. Can - - - can you spell your  
5 last name? And then you can go ahead  
6 and give your comment.

7                   MR. BROSNECK:

8                   B - R - O - S - N - E - C - K .

9                   MR. NICKLOW:

10                  Thank you.

11                  MR. BROSNECK:

12                  You're welcome. So, it  
13 could have a bad trip. I heard there  
14 was supposed to be a lot of cuts. So,  
15 like, people can't get to work, you  
16 know what I mean? They have less  
17 money. Some of the businesses might  
18 have to start closing earlier or  
19 something. You know, reducing their  
20 hours, you know, bad for the economy.  
21 Then, who knows? Maybe it could  
22 actually cause the crime rate to go up  
23 because people might, like, get  
24 desperate because they have less money,  
25 and then they might start walking

1 around the street sticking people up or  
2 something.

3 And because I remember in  
4 the '80s and the '90s, there was people  
5 like that around Pittsburgh a lot. And  
6 now, you don't see them anywhere, you  
7 know what I mean? And I, you know, I  
8 think it's better without them, you  
9 know. And, you know. And, you know,  
10 so you keep the economy running smooth,  
11 you know, people are happy. They feel  
12 happy. They don't, you know, take ---  
13 keeps crime down, you know.

14 You know, I don't know.  
15 Just --- it's just a thought, you know.  
16 You know, plus, you know, there's like,  
17 you know, a lot of people, you know,  
18 elderly people, you know, in  
19 wheelchairs and all that, you know.  
20 You know, or even just, you know, or  
21 even, you know, it could --- it could  
22 trickle down the whole economy. You  
23 know, businesses, even, like, art shows  
24 or something. People can't stay out as  
25 late, you know. You know, just, you

1 know, one thing leads to another, to  
2 another, like dominoes, you know.

3 I don't know. That's  
4 just how I'm thinking. Well, that's  
5 pretty much it.

6 MR. NICKLOW:

7 Thank you, Donald.

8 MR. BROSNECK:

9 Thank you, yeah.

10 MR. NICKLOW:

11 Next on our list is Mary  
12 Ann Merranko. Mary Ann, if you're  
13 present, please make your way to the  
14 speaker's table.

15 Christy Kuehn. Kuehn  
16 (pronunciation)?

17 MS. KUEHN:

18 Kuehn.

19 MR. NICKLOW:

20 As a reminder, you have  
21 three minutes for your public comment.  
22 And to help our Court Reporter, please  
23 state your full name again, and spell  
24 it slowly and clearly before you begin  
25 speaking.

1                   MS. KUEHN:

2                   Okay.

3                   Thank you. I was trying  
4                   to figure out who was speaking. My  
5                   name is Christy Kuehn, C-H-R-I-S-T-Y.  
6                   Last name is K-U-E-H-N. Okay. All  
7                   right.

8                   Hello, everybody. I'm  
9                   here as a resident of Whitehall  
10                  Borough, someone who knows firsthand  
11                  the importance of public transportation  
12                  for myself and my partner, and also for  
13                  many of my neighbors and friends in the  
14                  - - - in the area.

15                  Cutting the bus lines in  
16                  Whitehall and the neighboring  
17                  communities will significantly decrease  
18                  our residents' access to downtown and  
19                  other areas of cultural and industry  
20                  based importance. Fewer buses means  
21                  fewer ways to get to work, doctor's  
22                  appointments, and grocery stores. This  
23                  can lead to a negative economic impact  
24                  on our entire region. Fewer buses also  
25                  means few opportunities for people to

1 visit their friends and family and  
2 attend cultural events, and this can  
3 impact the vibrancy of our community.

4 Public transportation is  
5 a necessity for a vibrant, thriving  
6 city. It's not a luxury. And we know  
7 that from history and other cities that  
8 cuts and increased prices equal fewer  
9 riders, which can then lead to even  
10 more cuts. So I hope that these  
11 decisions that impact so many in our  
12 region can be made with people at the  
13 center, and the needs of our community  
14 at the center, and not budgets and  
15 spreadsheets. Thank you.

16 MR. NICKLOW:

17 Thank you.

18 Mary Ann Merranko. Mary  
19 Ann, if you're present, please make  
20 your way to the speaker's table.

21 Mark Schramm.

22 If there is anyone else  
23 who is registered to speak at a  
24 different time and would like to do so.

25 MR. CONNERS:

1 Hello there. Thank you  
2 all for putting this event together.  
3 My name is Patrick Conners, and last  
4 name's spelled C-O-N-N-E-R-S. I am the  
5 Executive Director for the Quaker  
6 Valley Council of Governments.

7 So, I'm just going to  
8 read into the record a correspondence  
9 we wrote to PRT dated April 28th, 2025.  
10 So, the Quaker Valley Council of  
11 Governments is writing to express its  
12 deep concern regarding the proposed  
13 cuts and service reductions currently  
14 under consideration by Pittsburgh  
15 Regional Transit. Our organization  
16 seeks to facilitate multi-municipal  
17 efforts and implements efficient, cost  
18 effective programming, and serves on  
19 behalf of our 16 member municipalities.

20 Just for a visual, our  
21 territory starts at the Bellevue  
22 Pittsburgh City line and just kind of  
23 follows the Ohio River and Route 65 all  
24 the way to Beaver County. Public  
25 transit plays a vital role in

1 connecting our communities, to  
2 employment centers, medical centers,  
3 educational opportunities, and  
4 essential daily needs. In particular,  
5 the residents within our member  
6 municipalities, many of whom are  
7 seniors, individuals with disabilities,  
8 and families with limited  
9 transportation options, rely heavily on  
10 the services provided by Pittsburgh  
11 Regional Transit to maintain a quality  
12 of life and participate fully in our  
13 regional economy.

14 Under the current  
15 proposal, which was announced on March  
16 20th, 2025, the route --- sorry. The  
17 route also, so these following routes  
18 are being proposed to be either reduced  
19 or completely cut. Route 13, Route 14,  
20 Route 16, and the Route 19L.  
21 Additionally, PRT is also proposing  
22 that closure of three of their 79 owned  
23 bridges. All three of those proposed  
24 bridges are within our territory.  
25 Those bridges are the Avalon California

1 Avenue Bridge, the Ben Avenue Church  
2 Avenue Bridge, and the Emsworth Camp  
3 Horne Bridge.

4 So lastly, the plan also  
5 calls for a reduction in paired transit  
6 access by 16 --- 62 percent. If all of  
7 these proposed cuts would take effect,  
8 nearly every resident within our member  
9 communities would be detrimentally  
10 impacted. The current PRT proposal,  
11 particularly the closure of the three  
12 neighborhood bridges, would also have a  
13 disproportional negative impact in our  
14 communities. Limited access and  
15 mobility for vulnerable populations,  
16 and risking greater isolation and  
17 hardship. Moreover, cutting service  
18 now would undermine years of regional  
19 planning efforts that aim to promote  
20 sustainable growth, economic  
21 development, and equitable access  
22 across Allegheny County.

23 The QBCOG respectfully  
24 urges PRT to reconsider the proposed  
25 service cuts and engage directly with



1     our member municipalities and leaders  
2     across the region. Whether through  
3     targeted adjustments or finding  
4     partnerships, we believe there's  
5     opportunities to make these cuts less  
6     detrimental to our region. I thank you  
7     in advance for any consideration that  
8     you have.

9                     And I would note that Ms.  
10    Silbermann did attend one of our Board  
11    meetings on April 16th, so we do thank  
12    her for her time there. Thank you  
13    again for your consideration.

14                    MR. NICKLOW:

15                    Thank you, Patrick.

16                    Mary Ann Merranko. Mary,  
17    if you're here, please make your way to  
18    the speaker's table.

19                    Mark Schramm.

20                    If there is anyone else  
21    in attendance who is registered to  
22    speak at a different time and would  
23    like to do so now, you may make your  
24    way up to the speaker's table. If  
25    there is anyone in attendance who is

1 not registered to speak and would like  
2 to do so, you may make your way up to  
3 the speaker's table at this time.

4 As a reminder, you have  
5 three minutes for your public comment.  
6 To help our Court Reporter, please  
7 state your name, your full name, and  
8 spell it slowly and clearly before you  
9 begin speaking. Thank you.

10 MS. MARZEC:

11 My name is Linda, L-I-N-  
12 D-A. Marzec, M-A-R-Z-E-C. I live over  
13 McKeesport.

14 I heard that you was  
15 cutting bus fare, but I have a son  
16 that's graduating this year. And he  
17 just finished --- he's going to finish  
18 school this year, thank God for that.  
19 But he'll be living over McKeesport  
20 with me. Because last four years, we  
21 got evicted out of our apartment.

22 I'm sorry. I get  
23 emotional when I talk.

24 MR. NICKLOW:

25 It's okay. Take your

1 time.

2 MS. MARZEC:

3 But for you to cut buses  
4 where I am and my husband, it's not  
5 right. It's not cool. I don't need  
6 this this year. Especially my son  
7 graduating. And my Uncle Tommy, he  
8 don't have a car anymore. He lives in  
9 Braddock Hills, Brinton Manor. It  
10 takes me to go over there, maybe a full  
11 day to go over there and get back home  
12 where I am. Because I have to be in  
13 before 12:00, midnight.

14 My stepmom don't like me  
15 being out late. Because I live over  
16 McKeesport. That's unsafe for me to  
17 live there. And plus traveling, seeing  
18 my son or, you know, being at one of  
19 the school events. I can't take that.  
20 Thank you.

21 MR. NICKLOW:

22 Thank you, Linda.

23 Next on our list is Mary  
24 Ann Merranko. Mary, if you're present,  
25 please make your way to the speaker's

1       table.

2                   George Karpacs.   George,  
3   if you're present, please make your way  
4   to the speaker's table.

5                   Mark Schramm.

6                   If there's anyone who is  
7   registered to speak at another time and  
8   would like to do so now, please make  
9   your way to the speaker's table.

10                  If there is anyone who  
11   has yet to register to speak and would  
12   like to do so now, please make your way  
13   to the speaker's table.

14                  MR. SCHMIDLAPP:

15                  Additional minute?

16                  MR. NICKLOW:

17                  Yes, thank you.   Just do  
18   us a favor, and just state your name  
19   when you come back up.   Thank you.

20                  MR. SCHMIDLAPP:

21                  Hello again.   It's Jacob  
22   Schmidlapp, S-C-H-M-I-D-L-A-P-P.

23                  Sitting in the back, a  
24   couple points I'd like to note.   If  
25   none of the personal stories hit home

1       for Harrisburg, two points. The first  
2       being, all these people from the far  
3       flung destinations. It's well known  
4       around the country how terrible traffic  
5       is in the city, and that is with  
6       current transportation. Figuring even  
7       if everyone who already takes transit  
8       is forced to take a cab, drive on their  
9       own, traffic would be abysmal.

10               From McKeesport, it's a  
11       half hour drive. You sit on the  
12       parkway, it's 45 minutes, probably near  
13       an hour. Moon, that's easily an hour  
14       sitting on Green Tree Hill. It's half  
15       an hour by bus, 20 minutes. Same  
16       token, the airport flyer. Welcome to  
17       Pittsburgh. Your student just got  
18       accepted into Pitt. Welcome, glad to  
19       have you. You now have to take three  
20       buses to get to Pitt. Because the 28X,  
21       you have to take --- go from the  
22       airport to Carnegie, Carnegie downtown  
23       since the 100 was --- or was it --- the  
24       100. Take transfer downtown, go out to  
25       Pitt. Easily an hour, if not longer.

1 I remember back when the  
2 28X was run on a motor coach. Thirty  
3 (30) minutes, door to door. Lovely.  
4 Absolutely lovely.

5 So, short version. Think  
6 of the traffic. State would have to  
7 pay for expansion of, highway  
8 expansion. McKnight Road, Route 19.  
9 All these will be unserved by city  
10 buses. Cost millions a mile to expand  
11 those. You'll be held accountable.  
12 Why is the traffic so bad?

13 And once again, welcome  
14 to Pittsburgh. You have to take three  
15 buses and spend an hour and a half  
16 getting to Pitt. Getting to the  
17 football game. That's, there we go.  
18 Thank you, again, for your time.

19 MR. NICKLOW:

20 Thank you, Jacob.

21 Next on our list is Mary  
22 Ann Merranko. Mary Ann, if you're  
23 present, please make your way to the  
24 speaker's table.

25 George Karpacs.

1                   MR. KARPACS:

2                   Yes.

3                   MR. NICKLOW:

4                   As a reminder, you have  
5                   three minutes for your public comment.  
6                   And to help our Court Reporter, please  
7                   state your full name again, and spell  
8                   it slowly and clearly before you begin  
9                   speaking.

10                  MR. KARPACS:

11                  Okay.

12                  My name is George Karpacs  
13                  of 720 Royal Drive, South Park  
14                  Township, library section.

15                  And I would say when I  
16                  was a student here at the university in  
17                  1993, I was able to ride transit into  
18                  the city for \$1.25 and a quarter for a  
19                  transfer, so I could go in and back for  
20                  \$1.50. And - - - and you managed to keep  
21                  the fares at a manageable level for a  
22                  long time.

23                  And specific to today's  
24                  hearing here, because I live in the  
25                  library section, that's the last stop

1 on the, what was the Blue Line and  
2 currently called the Silver Line. And  
3 so, I have friends that rely on ACCESS  
4 for dialysis and other things. And ---  
5 and when they can't get the ACCESS,  
6 they need to, you know, they're out and  
7 about on other days of the week, and  
8 they utilize the --- the Silver Line.  
9 And this is a very vital link into the  
10 South Hills. Not just South Park, but  
11 Bethel, Castle Shannon, and other  
12 neighborhoods.

13 And, yeah, we just  
14 strongly encourage you to keep this  
15 transit line alive, and it's a vital  
16 link and connecting these communities  
17 with the city. And whatever you can do  
18 to, you know, keep it --- keep it up  
19 and running, I know it's a funding  
20 issue, and but just do what we can to  
21 --- to try to keep this vital service  
22 active. Thank you.

23 MR. NICKLOW:

24 Thank you, George.

25 MR. KARPACS:



1                   Yeah, thank you.

2                   MR. NICKLOW:

3                   Next on our list is Mark  
4 Schramm. Mark, if you're present,  
5 please make your way to the speaker's  
6 table.

7                   If there is anyone else  
8 in attendance who is registered to  
9 speak at another time and would like to  
10 do so now, you may make your way up to  
11 the speaker's table. If there is  
12 anyone in attendance who has not  
13 registered to speak and would like to  
14 do so, you may make your way up to the  
15 speaker's table.

16                   - - -

17                   (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
18 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

19                   - - -

20                   MR. NICKLOW:

21                   As a reminder, if there's  
22 anyone in attendance who is registered  
23 to speak at a different time and would  
24 like to do so now, you may make your  
25 way up to the speaker's table. And if

1 anyone has not registered to speak, but  
2 would like to do so, you may make your  
3 way up to the speaker's table at this  
4 time.

5 - - -

6 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
7 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

8 - - -

9 MR. NICKLOW:

10 As a reminder, you have  
11 three minutes for your public comment.  
12 To help our Court Reporter, please  
13 state your full name again, and spell  
14 it slowly and clearly before you begin  
15 speaking.

16 MR. MATTHEWS:

17 Hello. My name is Ryan  
18 Matthews, R-Y-A-N M-A-T-T-H-E-W-S.

19 So, hello again. I was  
20 here at Soldiers and Sailors this  
21 morning. I'm just doing this thing  
22 where I like to tell you guys what I've  
23 been doing, riding public  
24 transportation. So I took the bus to  
25 my employer's headquarters in Uptown,

1       that's near Duquesne University, to  
2       attend a couple of meetings. So I  
3       walked out of here, and hopped on what  
4       I think was a 61D. And then I shortly  
5       after found out that it no longer goes  
6       downtown, whoops. So I think the bus  
7       driver told me that only the 61A and C  
8       and the 71B does that now, out of those  
9       two numbered routes.

10               So I'm a University of  
11       Pittsburgh alum, and in the years 2014  
12       to 2018, I would walk out of this very  
13       building here just to the front and get  
14       on any 60 or 71 bus, 61A, B, C, or D,  
15       or 71A, B, C or D. That's eight  
16       different buses. Not a care in the  
17       world. Pretty much never checked the  
18       schedule, and something always came  
19       when I was getting in before an early  
20       class or staying late doing whatever  
21       college students do. I didn't worry.

22               Sometimes my friends and  
23       family would ask me, does the bus even  
24       run this late? Are you going to be  
25       okay? And I said, yes, it does. It's

1 fine.

2 So what I'm really trying  
3 to say is that getting the expected  
4 full funding for 2026 and beyond is  
5 what I initially came here for, but  
6 that's apparently not even enough  
7 because there's less routes, when I  
8 wasn't paying attention, that got cut  
9 in the meantime.

10 So I guess to  
11 Pennsylvania or the federal government,  
12 I'm not sure of the exact funding  
13 structure. Structure. Please increase  
14 funding so that we can bring back the  
15 routes that existed before, in addition  
16 to getting the funding that, you know,  
17 we're already trying to fight for.

18 I heard --- I heard  
19 somebody say before the words reliable  
20 and dedicated funding, and that sounds  
21 like a good idea to me because I would  
22 prefer that you could get distracted  
23 for a couple years, and then come back  
24 to visit Pitt and not find that things  
25 have disappeared again. That's what I

1 have. Thank you.

2 MR. NICKLOW:

3 Thank you, Ryan.

4 Next on our list is Mary  
5 Ann Merranko. Mary, if you're present,  
6 please make your way to the speaker's  
7 table.

8 Mark Schramm.

9 If there's anyone else in  
10 attendance who is registered to speak  
11 at a different time, but would like to  
12 do so now, you may make your way up to  
13 the speaker's table. If there is  
14 anyone who has not registered to speak,  
15 but would like to do so now, you may  
16 make your way up to the speaker's  
17 table.

18 - - -

19 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
20 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

21 - - -

22 ATTORNEY CETRA:

23 Okay.

24 It is approximately 4:15  
25 p.m. here, so we are going to take a

1 short break, and go off the record. We  
2 will plan to reconvene at 4:25, give or  
3 take a few minutes.

4 - - -

5 (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS TAKEN  
6 DURING THE PROCEEDING.)

7 - - -

8 ATTORNEY CETRA:

9 Continue this public  
10 hearing, so we'll have our moderator  
11 call up our next scheduled speaker, and  
12 also encourage those who may be here a  
13 bit early to come up and speak if we  
14 have open slots.

15 MR. NICKLOW:

16 Next on our list is  
17 Virginia White. Virginia, if you're  
18 present, please make your way to the  
19 speaker's table.

20 As a reminder, you have  
21 three minutes for your public comment.  
22 To help our Court Reporter, please  
23 state your full name again, and spell  
24 it slowly and clearly before you begin  
25 speaking.

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25

MS. WHITE:

Hello. My name is  
Virginia White, V-I-R-G-I-N-I-A. Last  
name W-H-I-T-E. My zip code is 15216.

I live in Dormont  
specifically to take the Red Line to  
downtown Pittsburgh, and then to take a  
bus to Oakland where I go to school and  
I work. I take a 61A, B, or C or a  
71B.

During detours or  
breakdowns, I take the 36 or 41 to or  
from my home in Dormont. I don't have  
a driver's license A, due to an anti-  
epileptic medication I'm on that makes  
it unsafe to operate heavy machinery.  
And B, I cannot afford to purchase or  
maintain a car. I don't really have  
another option than public transit.

I have an associate's  
degree in biotechnology and worked in  
molecular biology research before  
becoming a sustainability coordinator  
and laboratory technician at Pitt's  
public makerspace Open Lab. And I

1 would not have been able to get a  
2 degree or work in research or  
3 sustainability if public transit were  
4 not available in Pittsburgh if these  
5 routes were cut like they are planned  
6 to be.

7 In the past, I worked in  
8 food service as a waitress and  
9 bartender and would not - - - and would  
10 have been stranded if not for Ubers and  
11 Lyfts when I finish night shifts. But  
12 these cuts would result in skyrocketing  
13 prices for ride shares, possibly making  
14 it impossible to get a ride home,  
15 making it impossible to live in the  
16 city if you don't have a car in a day  
17 when cars are unaffordable and fossil  
18 fuels are ruining our climate as we saw  
19 on Tuesday. That is just the  
20 beginning.

21 So, I implore that  
22 funding be approved and secured or I  
23 don't know how I will get to campus or  
24 work or how my husband or my coworkers,  
25 my friends will reliably and safely get



1       around town. Also, this will  
2       absolutely increase the incidence of  
3       drunk driving and deaths due to drunk  
4       driving. And that is my TED Talk. I  
5       hope that public transit does not get  
6       cut.

7                   MR. NICKLOW:

8                   Thank you.

9                   Mary Ann Merranko. Mary,  
10       if you're here, please come up to the  
11       speaker's table.

12                  Mark Schramm.

13                  If there is anyone else  
14       who is registered to speak at a  
15       different time and would like to come  
16       up now, you may come up to the  
17       speaker's table. If there is anyone  
18       who has not registered to speak and  
19       would like to do so, you may come up to  
20       the speaker's table at this time.

21                  As a reminder, you have  
22       three minutes for your public comment.  
23       And to help our Court Reporter, please  
24       state your full name, and spell it  
25       slowly and clearly before you begin

1 speaking.

2 MS. ZIMMERMAN:

3 All right.

4 Hello. my name is  
5 Abigail Zimmerman, A-B-I-G-A-I-L Z-I-M-  
6 M-E-R-M-A-N. These are just a few off  
7 the cuff comments based on my lived  
8 experience here at my four years of  
9 Pitt.

10 Over the summer, I had an  
11 internship helping Title I schools  
12 across the country. Most of these  
13 kids, their parents could not afford  
14 cars. The only way that they could get  
15 to and from school reliably was through  
16 buses. These are all entirely low  
17 income areas. To my understanding,  
18 many of these areas would have their  
19 transit cut.

20 These kids are already  
21 struggling enough as is. So, I implore  
22 you to think about the multi-  
23 generational impact that --- that this  
24 would cause.

25 I had something else.

1 I'm so sorry. Again, this is off the  
2 cuff, but. Oh, yes. The next thing  
3 that I wanted to ask, or I guess just  
4 request that is sent to the citizens of  
5 the is what these people can do for  
6 alternatives. Ride shares such as Uber  
7 are - - - can be extremely expensive.  
8 They're not necessarily a sustainable  
9 thing for people. During my time,  
10 again, internships in the city, I would  
11 have to take bus lines which are  
12 already an hour long to begin with.  
13 But oftentimes, I would have to take  
14 many Ubers. As someone not just living  
15 off of minimum wage, these Ubers were  
16 very expensive and took most of the  
17 little income that I was making to  
18 begin with. And if someone has to rely  
19 entirely on rideshares, I don't  
20 necessarily understand the point of  
21 living in a city to begin with.

22 This is not an issue I've  
23 had in my time in Philadelphia or New  
24 York. This was never an issue to begin  
25 with in these areas. People come to

1       these cities so that they can move to  
2       and from, place to place, work to home  
3       reliably. And if this happens to  
4       Pittsburgh, I'm very afraid for what  
5       the ramifications will be long term.

6                       Thank you for listening.

7                       MR. NICKLOW:

8                       Thank you, Abigail.

9                       Ramesh Bamwani

10       (phonetic). Mary Ann Merranko. Mark  
11       Schramm.

12                      If there is anyone else  
13       who is registered to speak at a  
14       different time who would like to do so,  
15       you can come up to the speaker's table  
16       now. If there is anyone who is has not  
17       registered to speak and would like to  
18       do so, you may come up to the speaker's  
19       table at this time.

20                      - - -

21       (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
22       THE PROCEEDINGS.)

23                      - - -

24                      MR. NICKLOW:

25                      Our next scheduled

1 speaker is Ramesh Bamwani. Is Ramesh  
2 here? John Cole? Brian Hatgelakas?

3 MR. HATGELAKAS:

4 I'm for 5:30, sir.

5 MR. NICKLOW:

6 Okay.

7 Is there anyone else here  
8 who is scheduled to speak at a  
9 different time and would like to do so  
10 now? You can step up to the speaker's  
11 table. And if there is anyone who has  
12 not registered, but would like to make  
13 a comment, you can make your way up to  
14 the speaker's table at this time.

15 As a reminder, you have  
16 three minutes for your public comment.  
17 And to help out our Court Reporter,  
18 please state your full name again, and  
19 spell it slowly and clearly before you  
20 begin speaking.

21 MS. GREENE:

22 Hello. My name is  
23 Kristen Green, K-R-I-S-T-E-N. Greene,  
24 G-R-E-E-N-E. My zip code is 15120, and  
25 I reside in Homestead, Pennsylvania.

1 I reside at Homestead,  
2 PA, and they're talking about cutting  
3 the two express routes that I take, the  
4 52L and the 53L, which gets me downtown  
5 in five to ten minutes to get my other  
6 bus that takes me to work rather than  
7 the 61C, which take --- which takes  
8 about an hour and is always crowded no  
9 matter what time or day I get on that  
10 bus.

11 My commute is already  
12 long. And then with the two express  
13 routes being cut, it's going to make it  
14 even longer. I like to ride them two  
15 buses to save me time. Saves me at  
16 least ten. Ten, 20 minutes rather than  
17 an hour with the 61C. And there are so  
18 many people that ride that bus to get  
19 downtown. I really don't want to see  
20 neither one of them get cut.

21 So many people depend on  
22 public transportation. This will have  
23 a huge effect on --- on so many  
24 communities, and what the customers are  
25 talking about, you know, it will not be

1 good. I don't own a car and honestly,  
2 I don't know when I'm ever going to be  
3 able to own a car. So I depend on  
4 public transportation. I've been  
5 taking these buses for 20 years now.  
6 And like I said, we don't --- we don't  
7 need any more cuts. It's already hard  
8 getting around as it is, and with the  
9 cuts that they're talking about, it  
10 will not be in the good thing.

11 So I'm just asking,  
12 please do something to keep the buses  
13 running because Pittsburgh needs public  
14 transportation. Thank you for your  
15 time.

16 MR. NICKLOW:

17 Thank you, Kristen.

18 Ramesh Bamwani? John  
19 Cole?

20 ---

21 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
22 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

23 ---

24 MR. NICKLOW:

25 Our next scheduled

1 speaker is Ramesh Bamwani. Ramesh, if  
2 you're here, please make your way to  
3 the speaker's table. John Cole?

4 If there is anyone else  
5 who has registered to speak at a  
6 different time and would like to do so  
7 now, you may make your way up to the  
8 speaker's table. If there is anyone  
9 who has not registered to speak and  
10 would like to do so, you may make your  
11 way up to the speaker's table now.

12 - - -

13 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
14 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

15 - - -

16 MR. NICKLOW:

17 Ramesh Bamwani, if you're  
18 present, please make your way to the  
19 speaker's table. John Cole. Mary Ann  
20 Merranko. Mark Schramm.

21 If there is anyone else  
22 who has registered to speak at a  
23 different time and would like to do so  
24 now, you may make your way up to the  
25 speaker's table. If there is anyone



1       who has not registered to speak and  
2       would like to do so now, you may make  
3       your way up to the speaker's table.

4                       - - -

5       (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
6       THE PROCEEDINGS.)

7                       - - -

8               MR. NICKLOW:

9               Brian Hatgelakas.

10              MR. HATGELAKAS:

11              Yes, I'm here.   Would  
12      somebody assist me?

13              MR. NICKLOW:

14              We're on our way.  
15      Someone is on his way right now.

16              MR. HATGELAKAS:

17              Thank you, Don.   How - - -  
18      how are you doing today?   Good?

19              MR. RIVETTI:

20              Doing well.   How are you?

21              MR. HATGELAKAS:

22              Good.   I'm going to be  
23      listening to all these after I'm done  
24      too.   Is that cool?

25              MR. RIVETTI:

1 Sure, sure. Absolutely.

2 MR. HATGELAKAS:

3 Thank you.

4 MR. RIVETTI:

5 Podium or chair?

6 MR. HATGELAKAS:

7 Podium.

8 MR. RIVETTI:

9 Podium is right in front,  
10 right there.

11 MR. HATGELAKAS:

12 Thank you. And the mic  
13 is.

14 MR. RIVETTI:

15 Mic is right here.

16 MR. HATGELAKAS:

17 Okay.

18 I'm used to these things.

19 I majored in broadcasting, so are ---  
20 okay. My name is Brian Hatgelakas, B-  
21 R-I-A-N H-A-T-G-E-L-A-K-A-S, and I live  
22 in the 15216 zip code where the 41 and  
23 38 currently travel.

24 To take services away  
25 from me, as a blind man who's been

1 living with my disability for, since I  
2 was born, but who doesn't treat it as  
3 such, you'd be putting me back a step  
4 further in life.

5 I work too hard in life  
6 to lose my independence. I rely on  
7 ACCESS to get around where I need to  
8 be. And I do not want to be denied any  
9 rides to anywhere. I graduated  
10 college, I have my bachelor's degree.  
11 I --- I'm actually trying to get into a  
12 career. Not just a job, guys. A  
13 career that would make me --- that  
14 would bring on different shifts, not  
15 the typical 9:00 to 5:00, like maybe  
16 the 2:00 to 10:00 shift or 10:00 p.m.  
17 to 6:00 a.m. shift.

18 To discontinue services  
19 on ACCESS after 11:00 at night would  
20 --- would be devastating. You'd be  
21 telling me no, that I cannot have this  
22 opportunity that I want to have. And  
23 also you'd be telling me no to a lot of  
24 stuff, too. To making a really, really  
25 good wage, to owning a house, to

1 everything I want in life. Even going  
2 back to school here at Pitt if I want  
3 to get a master's degree. You're  
4 essentially telling me no, that that  
5 doesn't matter either because of  
6 cutting services or making ACCESS very  
7 unreliable. Too, and making --- and  
8 --- and raising rates, too. That's  
9 unacceptable to me, too.

10 Please, I'm --- I'm  
11 begging you all to --- to push hard for  
12 funding and to push hard for what  
13 Allegheny County needs and deserves,  
14 not just a luxury, fully funded  
15 transportation. Thank you. That's all  
16 I have to say.

17 MR. NICKLOW:

18 Thank you, Brian. We  
19 appreciate you coming in and providing  
20 your comment to us.

21 Next on our list, Ramesh  
22 Bamwani. Ramesh, if you're here,  
23 please make your way to the speaker's  
24 table. John Cole. Tayveon Kevin  
25 Smith. Mary Ann Merranko. Mark

1 Schramm.

2 If there is anyone else  
3 who is registered to speak at a  
4 different time, but would like to do so  
5 now, please make your way to the  
6 speaker's table. If there is anyone  
7 who has not registered to speak, but  
8 would like to do so, please make your  
9 way to the speaker's table at this  
10 time.

11 - - -

12 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
13 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

14 - - -

15 MR. NICKLOW:

16 If there is anyone in  
17 attendance who is registered to speak  
18 at a different time and would like to  
19 do so now, you may make your way to the  
20 speaker's table.

21 - - -

22 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
23 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

24 - - -

25 MR. NICKLOW:

1                   Our next scheduled  
2 speaker is Jordan Tsigas. As a  
3 reminder, you have three minutes for  
4 your public comment. To help our Court  
5 Reporter, please state your full name  
6 again, and spell it slowly and clearly  
7 before you begin speaking.

8                   MR. TSIGAS:

9                   Jordan Tsigas, J-O-R-D-A-  
10 N T-S-I-G-A-S, and I'm currently living  
11 in Highland Park.

12                  My Pittsburgh Regional  
13 Transit story may be a bit different  
14 from others you've heard so far, as  
15 I've only become a resident of  
16 Pittsburgh as of four days ago. I am a  
17 Florida native, and I was attracted to  
18 moving to Pittsburgh during my ten  
19 month internship here from the fall of  
20 2023 to the spring of 2024. During my  
21 ten months here, I quickly fell in love  
22 with the city. It has a beautiful  
23 history, a lived in charm, and a dense  
24 urban area which, combined with its  
25 above average transit system, makes it

1 a very livable city, even without  
2 having access to a car.

3 I lived in Manchester  
4 during my internship, and I commuted to  
5 work via the T, taking it from  
6 Allegheny Station to downtown. There  
7 were occasional interruptions from  
8 construction and other projects, but as  
9 long as I was tuned in to PRT  
10 announcements, I could get by.

11 Using the PRT also gave  
12 me much better access to the city,  
13 compared to my roommates who drove  
14 around as having access to the whole  
15 greater Pittsburgh area, especially the  
16 South Hills with the convenience of the  
17 T, enabled me to learn about and  
18 explore the city with great freedom.

19 Now, after I've graduated  
20 from Florida State University and  
21 returned to Pittsburgh to work full  
22 time, I find myself worried and limited  
23 by the impending transit cuts. The  
24 system, which for me was a major  
25 motivator for me to pick up my life and

1 move to Pittsburgh in the first place,  
2 is now limiting where I can choose to  
3 live without risking losing access to  
4 my commute to work. I am currently  
5 living with a family who has offered to  
6 put me up while I apartment hunt, but  
7 the proposed cuts are severely limiting  
8 where I can realistically search for  
9 housing.

10 I have fallen in love  
11 with the city, but seeing so much of it  
12 at risk as being cut off from me and  
13 the further concern of having to leave  
14 altogether if I can't find reliable  
15 transportation to work is very  
16 disconcerting to me. I hope and pray  
17 that a solution to this problem can be  
18 found, not just but --- not just for  
19 me, but for other people hoping to move  
20 to the city, too. As without access to  
21 reliable and widespread transit, moving  
22 to Pittsburgh may remain a dream for me  
23 and others like me. Thank you.

24 MR. NICKLOW:

25 Thank you, Jordan.



1                   MR. TSIGAS:

2                   Thank you.

3                   MR. NICKLOW:

4                   Our next scheduled  
5 speaker is Taveon Kevin Smith. Taveon,  
6 if you're present, please make your way  
7 to the speaker's table.

8                   Ramesh Bamwani. John  
9 Cole. Mary Ann Merranko. Mark  
10 Schramm.

11                  If there is anyone in  
12 attendance who is registered to speak  
13 at a different time and would like to  
14 do so now, you may make your way up to  
15 the speaker's table.

16                  As a reminder, you have  
17 three minutes for your public comment.  
18 To help our Court Reporter, please  
19 state your full name again, and spell  
20 it slowly and clearly before you begin  
21 speaking.

22                  MR. GARGER:

23                  Hello. My name is Alan  
24 Garger, A-L-A-N G-A-R-G-E-R, and I'm  
25 currently a resident of Lawrenceville.

1 I'm here today to say  
2 that these cuts, long term, will end up  
3 costing the City of Pittsburgh very  
4 dually. Today, most of Pittsburgh is  
5 within a walkable distance of a bus  
6 stop. Studies have shown that  
7 properties within a walkable distance  
8 of a bus stop increased their land  
9 value by up to 30. The City of  
10 Pittsburgh states that \$143 million  
11 comes in from real estate tax per year.  
12 If we estimate that 35 percent of  
13 Pittsburgh will lose service and cause  
14 a 30 percent decrease in --- in land  
15 value, Pittsburgh will end up losing  
16 \$14 million per year.

17 Many small businesses  
18 also rely on public transit to generate  
19 the revenue. Many of them will need to  
20 lay off employees, increase prices, or  
21 close entirely without readily  
22 accessible public transit. Pittsburgh  
23 brought in \$220 million from income and  
24 payroll preparation taxes.

25 Throughout the entire

1 U.S., about 46 percent of --- of people  
2 are employed by small businesses. If  
3 we assume that 46 percent of  
4 Pittsburgh's population has a 35  
5 percent decrease in income in  
6 conjunction with these cuts, Pittsburgh  
7 will lose an additional \$35 million per  
8 year.

9 Cutting public transit  
10 also means that people will no longer  
11 have a viable alternative to driving.  
12 PennDOT states that there were 79 fatal  
13 accidents in 2023 in Allegheny County.  
14 We can expect this number to have  
15 increased by at least 35 percent with  
16 these proposed cuts, or 28 more deaths  
17 per year solely due to people  
18 increasing in driving.

19 The U.S. Department of  
20 Transportation estimates the  
21 statistical value of the life at \$13.7  
22 million. This is the expected economic  
23 output of a person throughout their  
24 entire lifetime. With 20 extra deaths  
25 per year, Allegheny County will miss

1 out on expected \$383 million in  
2 economic output for these people's  
3 lifetime. This only accounts for  
4 deaths due solely due to car accidents.

5 With 35 percent more cars  
6 on the road, you can expect 35 percent  
7 more pollutants in the air. The  
8 American Lung Association recently put  
9 out a study saying that Pittsburgh is  
10 the 17th worst special area in the U.S.  
11 in terms of air quality, and - - - and we  
12 should not be gunning for number one.

13 With just a one day  
14 decrease in life expectancy for  
15 Pittsburgh's 300,000 residents, we can  
16 expect to lose \$139 million in economic  
17 output. These cuts will harm  
18 Pittsburgh's bottom line. PRT, the  
19 City of Pittsburgh, and Allegheny  
20 County should be stepping up to ensure  
21 that these cuts do not go through. We  
22 need to be generating more revenue here  
23 at home, and ensure that funding for a  
24 public transit is continued independent  
25 of the whims of state or federal

1 politicians. And there are plenty of  
2 ways to generate funding instead of  
3 cutting existing lines.

4 PRT's ridership remained  
5 stagnant since 2022, and is down almost  
6 40 percent pre-pandemic. This is at  
7 the same time while --- on time  
8 percentage is just 66 percent for buses  
9 and 83 percent for light rail. If you  
10 want people to generate revenue by  
11 taking your service, make it better.

12 Additionally, we should  
13 be considering other sources of income  
14 like congestion pricing, which has  
15 already shown promise in New York. We  
16 can also consider increasing taxes on  
17 parking or redeveloping our parking  
18 lots to further spur usage of our  
19 public transit system and to further  
20 generate reliable funding.

21 This is a backbone to our  
22 economy here in Pittsburgh, and it is  
23 absolutely necessary that we keep this  
24 stable. Thank you.

25 MR. NICKLOW:

1 Thank you, Alan.

2 ATTORNEY CETRA:

3 Okay.

4 We're going to go off the  
5 record, take a brief break here. It is  
6 5:50, and we plan to resume, assuming  
7 we have speakers at, 6:00 p.m. Thank  
8 you.

9 - - -

10 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
11 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

12 - - -

13 MS. NANCY:

14 It is now 6:05, and I'd  
15 like to call the next speaker. The  
16 next scheduled speaker, Jonathan Graham  
17 Bernard. Is Jonathan Graham Bernard  
18 here? Jonathan Graham Bernard. Okay.

19 Is Taveon Kevin Smith  
20 here? Taveon Kevin Smith.

21 Is John Cole present?  
22 John Cole? Okay.

23 We have a few speakers  
24 that signed up to speak that did not  
25 arrive at their time earlier today. Is

1 Rebecca MacTaggart present? Mary Ann  
2 Merranko? Or Mark Schramm?

3 - - -

4 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
5 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

6 - - -

7 MS. NANCY:

8 Our next scheduled  
9 speaker is Robert Helwig.

10 You'll come up to the  
11 podium and state your name clearly, and  
12 you will have up to three minutes to  
13 speak.

14 MR. HELWIG:

15 Okay.

16 Thank you. Good evening,  
17 everyone. Thank you for your time. My  
18 name is Robert Helwig, R-O-B-E-R-T H-E-  
19 L-W-I-G. I live in Polish Hill  
20 neighborhood in Pittsburgh, 15219.

21 I am speaking today to  
22 oppose the cuts, also share anecdotes  
23 about how public transit has really  
24 benefited me. And from 2021 to 2023, I  
25 worked for the State Rep. in Braddock,

1       who is now our U.S. Representative.  
2       But in early 2022, my car broke down.  
3       I typically drove from Polish Hill or  
4       the south side, where my significant  
5       other lives, to Braddock. And then  
6       from Braddock, uptown in the evenings  
7       where I attended Duquesne Law at night.

8                 Fortunately, living in  
9       Polish Hill, I live on the P1 line. So  
10      I could take the east busway out to the  
11      end of the line in Swissvale, and then  
12      hop on a 59 or a 61A to take me down  
13      into Braddock. And I could do that in  
14      reverse in the evenings, or I can take  
15      a 61B all the way uptown. If I was  
16      staying in the south side, then I could  
17      take an 81 or an 82 or a 54 up into  
18      Oakland, catch a 61B.

19                But that job with Rep.  
20      Lee and the education that I got at  
21      Duquesne, extremely important in my  
22      life. And those were opportunities I  
23      probably would have had to forego, but  
24      for public transit. And I feel like  
25      everybody in this county should have



1       those same opportunities to be  
2       connected to the places and the people  
3       that are important to them.

4                       And I'll --- I'll share a  
5       little bit else. I'm an appointed  
6       member of a city board that votes  
7       focuses on developing and preserving  
8       affordable and accessible housing in  
9       the City of Pittsburgh. Thank you.

10       I'm very concerned that if these cuts  
11       and, you know, service rollback take  
12       effect, the very communities that rely  
13       on public transit the most, their  
14       housing prices are going to go up for  
15       no other reason other than, you know,  
16       landlords can charge more for --- for  
17       no improvements they've made to the  
18       property, but they just happen to  
19       benefit from the reduction of service.  
20       It would turn a public good into a  
21       luxury, and push out the very people  
22       who rely on that service.

23                       So thank you for your  
24       time this evening. Again, I'm speaking  
25       in opposition of the service cuts.

1       Thank you.

2                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

3                   Thank you, Robert.

4                   NANCY:

5                   Our next scheduled  
6 speaker is Brian, I hope I pronounce  
7 this correct, Hatgelakas?

8                   MR. HATGELAKAS:

9                   Hatgelakas.

10                  NANCY:

11                  Thank you.

12                  MR. HATGELAKAS:

13                  That's me, Nancy.

14                  NANCY:

15                  Okay.

16                  ATTORNEY CETRA:

17                  One second, Brian. Hang  
18 on one sec, Brian. We're going to have  
19 somebody assist you.

20                  MR. HATGELAKAS:

21                  Sorry about that. Thank  
22 you very much. Thank you, Don.

23                  MR. RIVETTI:

24                  No worries. Here, we're  
25 going to step forward to the podium.

1       The mic is here.

2                       MR. HATGELAKAS:

3               Thank you. My name is  
4       Brian Hatgelakas. That's B-R-I-A-N H-  
5       A-T-G-E-L-A-K-A-S. And I live in the  
6       South Hills, the 15216 zip code.

7               I'm speaking tonight  
8       because I do not want to see cuts  
9       happen. I want to see improvement to  
10      service. I --- I attended --- I  
11      attended college here in Pittsburgh,  
12      and I remember living in the downtown  
13      area in Point Park's dorms on Wood  
14      Street, and walking out of there and  
15      getting on a bus, going anywhere within  
16      ten minutes. This was back in the  
17      early 2000s, mind you.

18              But as the cuts have  
19      gotten worse and worse, busing has been  
20      unreliable. Now, I do not want to see  
21      that happen with ACCESS if the proposed  
22      service cuts happen. I don't want to  
23      see ACCESS become a shell of itself.  
24      As an ADA rider, I don't want to be  
25      told no about rides I can't go to.

1       What if I want to get my masters out  
2       here at Pitt or someplace again, like  
3       that? And they don't arrive for me,  
4       and the 41 and 38 won't be running, of  
5       course, with these cuts, then I'll be  
6       stranded. And if I'm stranded for  
7       class, I wouldn't pass a class and be  
8       able to graduate with a master's. And  
9       what if I'm stranded for work? I  
10      wouldn't be able to make money, and  
11      then I'd be fired. So this whole thing  
12      would be a domino effect.

13                       And also if, like I heard  
14      a kid from Florida say who moved here  
15      because of the attractiveness of the  
16      transit. In my case as a blind person,  
17      if opportunities aren't given to me and  
18      are just taken away from me, then I  
19      might just leave Pennsylvania  
20      altogether and look for a state with  
21      better services because there are  
22      transit services because there are - - -  
23      there are those out there with better  
24      services.

25                       I'm willing to pay more

1 for better service, not worse service  
2 that's a shell of itself. Please  
3 reconsider. Thank you.

4 ATTORNEY CETRA:

5 Thank you, Brian.

6 NANCY:

7 I want to call up our  
8 next speaker, Dorothy Sherman. Would  
9 you please come to the podium and state  
10 your name and spell that for us? And  
11 you will have up to three minutes to  
12 speak.

13 MS. SHERMAN:

14 Hello. My name is  
15 Dorothy Sherman, D-O-R-O-T-H-Y S-H-E-R-  
16 M-A-N. I am a resident in the  
17 Manchester neighborhood, 15233, and I'm  
18 here to speak against cutting the  
19 Manchester PRT line, specifically the  
20 18 and the 17 routes.

21 The current position is  
22 that the 18 line is part of a very low  
23 efficiency route, which is less than  
24 100 riders per day. And then the 17 is  
25 categorized as a moderate efficiency

1 route. So that would be reduced by 30  
2 percent or more of weekly service.

3 My belief is that  
4 shutting these roots are not the fix to  
5 your solution, especially with current  
6 school closure proposals from the  
7 school board and city discussions of  
8 North Side and Esplanade development.  
9 The Manchester area is already fairly  
10 isolated from the rest of the city  
11 because of the rivers, and ten percent  
12 of the residents in the neighborhood  
13 don't have a car. Cutting off lines to  
14 the heart of the city would pose a huge  
15 problem, especially when thinking about  
16 last week's storm that left my  
17 neighborhood without power for two  
18 days.

19 Having a consistent and  
20 accessible bus line in the neighborhood  
21 meant people were able to go to the  
22 grocery store. They were able to go to  
23 work and get out to parts of the city  
24 where there was power, and travel to  
25 check up on friends and family who

1        maybe didn't have the ability to leave.  
2        I also think it would be a problem if  
3        the schools were to close, if that goes  
4        through. What happens when the parents  
5        can't get to their gift kids who are  
6        now being shuttled across the West End  
7        Bridge? It just would be a problem.

8                        In my opinion, I also  
9        think that shutting down this line  
10       reeks of racism. The medium income of  
11       black families in Manchester is  
12       \$30,000, and seven percent of families  
13       live below the poverty level. Closing  
14       the bus route forces people out and  
15       opens the door for developers. I think  
16       shutting off the neighborhood from  
17       access to the city is cruel and  
18       unnecessary, and I think it shows a  
19       lack of care towards its  
20       underprivileged and underserved  
21       communities.

22                        I understand you guys are  
23       in a difficult position, but I do ask  
24       you to reconsider the cuts to these bus  
25       routes, and I hope for a funding

1 resolution that works for everyone.  
2 Thank you for your time and your  
3 consideration.

4 ATTORNEY CETRA:

5 Thank you, Dorothy. We  
6 appreciate you coming out and providing  
7 this comment.

8 NANCY:

9 The next speaker is Eric  
10 Severson. Eric, if you'll come up to  
11 the podium.

12 MR. SEVERSON:

13 Good evening. I'm Eric  
14 Severson. That's E-R-I-C S-E-V-E-R-S-  
15 O-N. I'm from Castle Shannon at zip  
16 code 15234.

17 So I take the Blue Line  
18 downtown every day, and then 14 over to  
19 my work in Leetsdale. Three out of  
20 nine employees I work with use the 14  
21 bus to get to work. So you close that  
22 bus route, it causes some headaches.

23 I've tried to use  
24 alternative routes. I know that Beaver  
25 County has a number one bus that goes



1 to my neighborhood, or through my work  
2 neighborhood. And I've tried using  
3 Google Maps to get, using that. And  
4 when I tried going to the bus stop to  
5 use it to go back towards downtown, it  
6 had a drop off only, so you couldn't  
7 actually use that bus stop. This was  
8 listed on Google Maps to go that way.  
9 So, that didn't work very well as,  
10 like, an alternative.

11 And I know that back in  
12 2022, I remember reading a report that  
13 PRT was talking with --- were talking  
14 about having, like, a hub kind of  
15 situation with the BCTA. That PRT  
16 would handle that route out to  
17 Ambridge, and then that would connect  
18 to that system over there. But the  
19 BCTA runs a route that goes all the way  
20 down to Pittsburgh during the week,  
21 which again was very useable from my  
22 experience.

23 But it competes with the  
24 14. So, I don't know what you guys are  
25 doing to contact BCTA about

1 consolidating or making this just work  
2 a little better. But closing it  
3 definitely affects me and my coworkers.

4 I --- I have --- I've  
5 looked at, like, other things, like,  
6 I've gone on the Silver Line. I know  
7 they're talking about closing that, and  
8 I've used it to go to Hometown  
9 Scooters. That's where I get my  
10 scooter serviced, so I don't go very  
11 often. But I just looked at, like,  
12 Library Station. It --- it ends, like,  
13 in a residential neighborhood. So it's  
14 like a commuter kind of setup. But if  
15 you look in that --- sure.

16 So in that area, you'll  
17 see it has an apartment building. It  
18 has a restaurant. It has things to do  
19 there, but you also see, like, another  
20 shopping area, and it's completely  
21 surrounded by parking lot. And there's  
22 a dirt path going over to the T  
23 station. So there's no design here to  
24 basically take pedestrian traffic to  
25 the T station. These places not only

1 need to be just for commuters, but they  
2 need to be places that you go and want  
3 to go, use the transit to go.

4 I also want to see that  
5 the PRT justifies its cost. Like, it  
6 costs \$432, I read in an article, to  
7 run public transit. Meanwhile, we're  
8 spending about \$13,000 on average for  
9 our car infrastructure. I want to know  
10 from PRODUCT, what does PRT save the  
11 whole budget? Thank you.

12 ATTORNEY CETRA:

13 Thank you, Eric.

14 NANCY:

15 Our next speaker is Lea  
16 Bridi. Bridi. Lea Bridi.

17 MS. BRIDI:

18 Hi, I'm Lea Bridi. It's  
19 L-E-A B-R-I-D-I. I live in  
20 Lawrenceville, 15201, and I am a bus  
21 commuter on the 91 downtown.

22 Our route is not up for  
23 cuts, but it would be a frequency  
24 reduction. And so, I just kind of  
25 wanted to give a general statement

1 about the importance of making it easy  
2 to commute downtown for work, for like  
3 the health of Pittsburgh's downtown  
4 and, like, its economic viability.  
5 It's very expensive to park downtown,  
6 certainly, like, out of my budget, and  
7 I think many people's. So if we want  
8 people to go to work and spend money  
9 downtown and not have downtown be like  
10 an abandoned ghost town, I think it's  
11 important that we make it easy for  
12 people. Which would mean, you know,  
13 frequent buses, not just buses in  
14 general.

15 And --- and that --- that  
16 is all I wanted to say. So, thank you.

17 ATTORNEY CETRA:

18 Thank you.

19 NANCY:

20 Our next speaker is Sean  
21 Green. Is Sean Green present? Sean  
22 Green.

23 At this time, we do not  
24 have any other scheduled speakers.  
25 Okay.

1                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

2                   Just a reminder that our  
3                   hearing today runs until 7:00 p.m. So  
4                   if anyone present wants, that hasn't  
5                   spoken yet, wants to speak or would  
6                   like to speak again, we encourage you  
7                   to do so.

8                   NANCY:

9                   We do have another  
10                  scheduled speaker. I'd like to call up  
11                  Justin. I don't --- Justin Hsieh. I  
12                  hope I pronounced that correctly.  
13                  Justin, just come up the podium and  
14                  state your name, and would you please  
15                  spell that for us? And you will have  
16                  up to three minutes to speak.

17                  MR. HSIEH:

18                  Hi. My name is Justin  
19                  Hsieh, H-S-I-E-H. I'm a student at  
20                  Carnegie Mellon University, and I live  
21                  off campus in the Shadyside.

22                  I would like to oppose  
23                  the service cuts, specifically to the  
24                  28X Airport Flyer. Currently, the 28X  
25                  has a stop on Carnegie Mellon's campus

1 as well as a stop at other universities  
2 in the area, including Chatham  
3 University, the University of  
4 Pittsburgh, Carlow University, and  
5 Duquesne University. Students,  
6 including myself, fly between college  
7 and their homes or other important  
8 locations, and the 28X is a crucial  
9 part of our travel.

10 And many of us choose to  
11 ride the 28X for its cost. A one seat  
12 ride on the 28X costs \$2.75. And  
13 sometimes, if you have a student ID,  
14 it's completely free. While the  
15 cheapest Uber to the airport right now  
16 costs an estimated \$52.94.

17 The cuts to the 28X  
18 specifically ending the service at  
19 Carnegie Station will seriously hinder  
20 our travel to the airport. To the best  
21 of my knowledge, traveling from  
22 Carnegie Mellon University to the  
23 airport under the new cuts will require  
24 taking three buses. One bus from  
25 Oakland to downtown, and then the G2

1 from downtown to Carnegie Station.  
2 Then finally, the 28X from Carnegie  
3 Station to the airport. With multiple  
4 transfers acquired and service on the  
5 G2 and 28X coming every 20 to 40  
6 minutes, travel time to and from the  
7 airport will become longer and less  
8 predictable.

9 Furthermore, times such  
10 as the beginning and end of the  
11 semester and break periods can see an  
12 increase in student ridership and  
13 sometimes the 28X fills up before  
14 everyone can get on, leaving people to  
15 wait for the next bus. And this  
16 problem will only be exacerbated by the  
17 service cuts.

18 Finally, ending service  
19 at 11:00 p.m. will leave riders no  
20 choice but to use a rideshare vehicle  
21 for returning from late night flights.

22 As a busy college  
23 student, I am concerned that the cuts  
24 to the 28X will have a negative impact  
25 on my time and money. Thank you for

1 your consideration.

2 ATTORNEY CETRA:

3 Thank you, Justin.

4 NANCY:

5 Our next speaker is Ross  
6 Nicotero. Ross.

7 MR. NICOTERO:

8 Evening, everybody.

9 Thanks for having me. I had a speech.  
10 A lot of you know me. Don't really  
11 have to use a speech based on what  
12 we're talking about.

13 So first and foremost,  
14 thank you for having these hearings and  
15 letting the people voice their opinion.  
16 My name's Ross Nicotero. I'm the  
17 President Business Agent of Local 85.  
18 I work with many of you ladies and  
19 gentlemen, and my members keep the  
20 service running through Allegheny  
21 County, as you are all aware.

22 So in this time and age,  
23 I also know, I'm also the president of  
24 the Pennsylvania Joint Conference  
25 Board, which represents another 18 ATU



1 properties around the Commonwealth. So  
2 I'm also smart enough to know that this  
3 isn't a Port Authority thing or a  
4 Pittsburgh thing, or a SEPTA thing.  
5 This is across the whole state and the  
6 whole country. But once again, this  
7 can't be allowed to go through.

8 I know a lot of you out  
9 there know that. I know we can't force  
10 legislators to give us money, but at  
11 the same time, there's grandmothers and  
12 grandfathers that need to get to  
13 grocery stores, pharmacies. A lot of  
14 people up here in Oakland have  
15 probably, I don't want to say bash the  
16 authority or brought it to your  
17 attention today about the service for  
18 the students. You know, not only the  
19 college students up here in the Oakland  
20 corridor through Chatham, CMU, and  
21 Pitt, but also we have high school  
22 students that ride our service.

23 For every dollar invested  
24 in public transportation, you get about  
25 four or five back in the local economy.

1 We're sitting here a year out from  
2 having Oakmont, having the U.S. open  
3 here in a month or so, the NFL draft.  
4 No service after 11:00 p.m., no special  
5 service for the Steelers, Pirates, or  
6 concerts? It's --- it's completely  
7 unacceptable. Nineteen (19)  
8 municipalities wouldn't have any type  
9 of service altogether.

10 We've been through this.  
11 A lot of the people sitting up on the  
12 stage, we went through this in 2011.  
13 Before we were flexed money year to  
14 year and Act 89 coming through. So ---  
15 thank you, my dear.

16 So, I'm just here to  
17 voice my concerns about the people that  
18 I represent that provide the service to  
19 the people of Allegheny County. It's  
20 very, very frustrating that we're  
21 dealing with this, both you and I,  
22 collaboratively. But at the same time,  
23 it also doesn't affect just public  
24 transportation. You know, when you're  
25 talking about ACCESS, people that need

1 to get to hospitals, dialysis,  
2 restaurant workers, you could decimate  
3 the local economy based on what's going  
4 on. Forty-one (41) out of our 100  
5 routes, gone. The Silver Line, gone.  
6 It's completely unacceptable.

7 So, I thank you for your  
8 time. I appreciate it, and look  
9 forward to talking to a lot of you in  
10 the next coming days. Thanks.

11 ATTORNEY CETRA:

12 Thank you, Ross. And of  
13 course, we look forward to continuing  
14 to work with you and your team in  
15 Harrisburg and beyond. Thank you.

16 NANCY:

17 Our next speaker is  
18 Natasha Matulevic. If you'll state  
19 your name and spell that for us, and  
20 then you will have up to three minutes  
21 to speak.

22 MS. MATULEVIC:

23 Thank you. My name's  
24 Natasha Matulevic, N-A-T-A-S-H-A M-A-T-  
25 U-L-E-V-I-C. I hail from 15104.

1                   And my biggest plea is  
2     not to cut service past 11 o'clock. I  
3     work at AGH Apothecary at Allegheny  
4     General Hospital, where we have a lot  
5     of staff that takes the bus to our  
6     hospital. We also have a lot of  
7     patients that take our bus. That take  
8     the bus to our hospital. And  
9     eliminating routes to the hospital  
10    after 11:00 p.m. would be detrimental  
11    to the public health. Not only because  
12    patients wouldn't be able to get to our  
13    ER, but because a lot of our employees,  
14    they work weird shifts. Hospital  
15    shifts are not 9:00 to 5:00 downtown  
16    shifts.

17                  And it's upsetting to  
18    think that you would all be okay with  
19    our nurses, our pharmacy technicians,  
20    our phlebotomists, our doctors walking  
21    through the North Side to downtown, and  
22    sometimes beyond, just because they  
23    have hospital shifts.

24                  And that is all I have to  
25    say is please reconsider this. I

1 understand that you guys have to have  
2 funding, but our public health should  
3 be a huge concern. And it --- cutting  
4 into service off at 11 o'clock is not a  
5 good thing for our public health.  
6 Thank you.

7 ATTORNEY CETRA:

8 Thank you, Natasha.

9 NANCY:

10 At this time, we have no  
11 other scheduled speakers. Is there  
12 somebody that has --- would like to  
13 speak that has not spoken already?

14 ---

15 (WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
16 THE PROCEEDINGS.)

17 ---

18 ATTORNEY CETRA:

19 Okay.

20 We're heading into the  
21 final ten minutes of today's public  
22 hearing. So if there's anyone who  
23 still hasn't spoken that would like to  
24 speak, this would be the time to come  
25 up.

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(WHEREUPON, THERE WAS A PAUSE DURING  
THE PROCEEDINGS.)

---

ATTORNEY CETRA:

Okay.

PRT's records indicate  
that there are no remaining speakers  
registered to provide public comment at  
this public hearing who have not  
already provided their comments or were  
given the opportunity to provide their  
comments, and we are now approaching  
the 7:00 p.m. advertised end time for  
this hearing.

So we will now adjourn  
this public hearing. On behalf of  
PRT's Board and staff, I want to thank  
everyone who took the time to  
participate today and provide PRT with  
your comments regarding the proposed  
funding crisis related FY 2026, fare  
increases and service reductions. Our  
third, and final, public hearing in  
this series of hearings is scheduled

1       for 9:00 a.m. on June 12th at the David  
2       L. Lawrence Convention Center, and we  
3       are adjourned. Thank you.

4                   \* \* \* \* \*

5                   MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6:56 P.M.

6                   \* \* \* \* \*

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## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.

Dated the 20th day of May, 2025

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chelsea Curry", written over a horizontal line.

Chelsea Curry,

Court Reporter



# Public Hearing 2

**Date:** 5/6/2025

**Location:** Soldiers and Sailors

**Room:** Auxiliary

**Time:** Morning

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED SERVICE REDUCTIONS

AND FARE INCREASE

PUBLIC MEETING

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: Kelsey Shannon, Member

HEARING: Tuesday, May 6, 2025

9:00 a.m.

LOCATION: Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Museum

4141 Fifth Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15213

WITNESSES: None

Reporter: Benjamin Morrow

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A P P E A R A N C E S

Bill Gasior, Moderator

## I N D E X

DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES

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CERTIFICATE

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## E X H I B I T S

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

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MS. SHANNON: Good morning. My name is Kelsey Shannon for Pittsburgh Regional Transit. I am the Deputy Chief of Strategic Initiatives.

PRT is conducting this public hearing as part of a public comment period that began on 8:00 am Monday, March 31st and will conclude Wednesday, June 18th, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. to receive public input on PRT's proposed funding crisis related to fare increases and service reductions.

PRT's Chief Executive Officer Katharine Kellerman, currently in Harrisburg advocating for transit funding, so she will not be in attendance at today's hearing.

Before we begin to receive public comment, our hearing moderator, Bill Gasior, will go over some housekeeping information.

MR. GASIOR: This hearing is being recorded and transcribed by a court reporter. If you do not want to be recorded, please exit the hearing room at this time.

Please note that we have American Sign Language and Spanish language interpreters to provide translations services during the hearing

1 upon request.

2 For participants who registered  
3 provide public comment at today's hearing, you will  
4 be called up to speak at a designated time, though  
5 you may be called up as much as 15 minutes early to  
6 speak if there are no other speakers scheduled to  
7 speak.

8 For participants who are not pre  
9 registered, you have been placed on an open time  
10 slot to speak and will be called up at your  
11 designated time, though you may also be called up  
12 every called up as much as 15 minutes early to speak  
13 if there are no other speakers scheduled to speak.

14 Each speaker will have three minutes  
15 to provide their public comment. When called upon,  
16 please clearly state your name and spell it and  
17 speak clearly. The hearing moderator will alert you  
18 when one minute - when you have one minute  
19 remaining. If your three minutes are up and you  
20 want to provide further comment, you may do so via  
21 telephone, regular mail or online until 5:00 p.m.  
22 Eastern Standard Time on Wednesday, June 18th, 2025.

23 Additional details on these other  
24 methods to submit public comment to PRT regarding  
25 the proposed funding crisis related to fiscal year

1 2026 fare increase and service reductions is  
2 available on the PRT's website at  
3 [www.rideprg.org/funding-crisis](http://www.rideprg.org/funding-crisis).

4                 Speakers cannot donate or delegate  
5 their allotted of time to any other individual  
6 interested in speaking, but speakers may read in  
7 written comments they have been brought on behalf of  
8 another individual during their scheduled comment  
9 time.

10                The proposed - the purpose of this  
11 public hearing is for PRT to receive public comment  
12 only. Participating PRT Board members and/or staff  
13 members will not respond to public comment provided  
14 during the hearing, but all comments will be  
15 recorded and analyzed as part of the public comment  
16 collection process.

17                Additionally, there is an information  
18 tables set up outside the hearing room where PRT  
19 staff can answer additional questions.

20                Both PRT Board members and senior  
21 management will listen to the public comments during  
22 the public hearing.

23                At this time, I would ask PRT Board  
24 members who are in attendance to identify  
25 themselves. I would now ask PRT senior management



1 who are in attendance to identify themselves.

2 This public hearing was scheduled  
3 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 7:00  
4 p.m. with a two hour break from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00  
5 p.m. PRT intends to conduct a public hearing for the  
6 entire advertised time periods to ensure members of  
7 the public who did not pre register but appear today  
8 and sign in to speak have the opportunity to do so.

9 MS. SHANNON: Thank you, Bill.

10 Absent additional state funding, PRT  
11 is facing an operating budget deficit of  
12 approximately 100 million for its fiscal year 2026.  
13 PRT is required by law to pass a balanced budget and  
14 with so many fixed costs we are proposing a 35  
15 percent reduction in bus, light rail and incline  
16 services. If approved by PRT's Board, these changes  
17 would begin with PRT's February 2026 service  
18 adjustments along with a 25 cent fare increase.

19 Additionally, due to the severity of  
20 the budget deficit, corresponding reductions to  
21 service levels and increases in fares are also being  
22 proposed for PRT's sponsored paratransit program  
23 ACCESS. This program provides demand response  
24 transportation services for eligible individuals  
25 with disabilities and senior citizens in Allegheny

1 County.

2 In summary of the proposed funding  
3 crisis related FY2026 fare increases and service  
4 reductions is available on PRT's website at  
5 [www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis](http://www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis).

6 We will now begin to receive public  
7 comment if there is any.

8 ---

9 (WHEREUPON, A BREAK WAS HELD.)

10 ---

11 MS. SHANNON: We will now take a  
12 break and go off record from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
13 This public hearing will resume at 3:00 p.m.

14

15 \* \* \* \* \*

16 HEARING CONCLUDED AT 12:51 P.M.

17 \* \* \* \* \*

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## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter,  
that the foregoing proceedings were taken  
stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to  
typewriting by me or under my direction; and that  
this transcript is a true and accurate record to the  
best of my ability.

Dated the 20th day of May, 2025

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin Morrow". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Benjamin Morrow,

Court Reporter

# Public Hearing 2

**Date: 5/6/2025**

**Location: Soldiers and Sailors**

**Room: Auxiliary**

**Time: Afternoon**

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED SERVICE REDUCTIONS

AND FARE INCREASE

PUBLIC MEETING

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: Jeffrey Devlin, Member  
Tom Burgunder, Member  
Senator Lindsey Williams, Member  
Charles Reeves, Member  
Amy Silbermann, Member  
Donminika Brown, Member  
Don Rivetti, Member  
Jim Ritchie, Member  
Inez Colon, Member

HEARING: Tuesday, May 6, 2025  
3:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Museum  
4141 Fifth Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Reporter: Benjamin Morrow

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1 WITNESSES: Kristen Greene  
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## A P P E A R A N C E S

Nancy Barylak, Moderator

Emily Gwash, ACCESS

Alexi Sakalik, PRT Staff Member

## I N D E X

DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES

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TESTIMONY

By Kristen Greene

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DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES

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## E X H I B I T S

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NONE OFFERED

## P R O C E E D I N G S

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MS. SAKALIK: So if you do not want to be recorded, please exit the hearing room now. Each speaker has up to three minutes to provide public comment and should come up to the speaker's table when called upon and state their name clearly and spell it for the court reporter before beginning to provide your public comment.

Additionally, the purpose of this public hearing is for PRT to receive public comments. So our Board members and staff will be listening to your comments, but we will not be answering questions or actively responding to your comments. Questions can be directed to PRT staff members stationed at information tables outside the hearing room.

Moderator do we have any speakers?

MS. BARYLAK: We do not have anyone at this time.

MS. SAKALIK All right, cool. And now we just sit here.

MS. GREENE: Hello, my name is Kristen Greene, K-R-I-S-T-E-N, Greene, G-R-E-E-N-E. My zip code is 15210 and I reside - I resided in

1 Homestead and I have been a transit user since I was  
2 14 years old.

3 Over the years, transit services have  
4 declined for regular users. Recently the Port  
5 Authority of Pittsburgh proposed closing 40  
6 additional routes due to lack of funds as this  
7 concerns me deeply as I depend on public - on the  
8 buses to get where I need to go.

9 Additionally, these closures will  
10 negatively affect communities. Many people depend  
11 on transit to get to the work, school and doctor's  
12 appointments. And like I said, how do you expect  
13 these residents to get where they need to go with no  
14 bus services? And then what about people who work  
15 late at night and do not have a safe way home? And  
16 what about - sorry. Or work overnight as well? You  
17 can't be serious.

18 And then I'm just asking, please take  
19 our safety into consideration. Port Authority  
20 workers who also may continue to be affected by  
21 these budget cuts. There will be layoffs and what  
22 would you do about that? And then something needs  
23 to be done to prevent these closures. The Port  
24 Authority needs to work with state and local  
25 organizations and governments and as a team come up

1 with a solution.

2 Pittsburghers need managed transit.  
3 It's already difficult to get around with the city  
4 with the current services, let alone closing  
5 additional routes. In addition to the fare  
6 increases, these proposed routes will negatively  
7 affect the residents of our city.

8 So I'm just asking the leaders of the  
9 Port Authority to rethink these proposed changes.  
10 We need to keep the buses running. Pittsburghers  
11 depend on public transportation. And then also  
12 listen to your employees, especially the bus  
13 operators, as they have a stake in these changes as  
14 well. Thank you.

15 MS. BARYLAK: Well, thank you for  
16 your time.

17 MS. GREENE: I've been riding these  
18 buses for 20 years and I just - not everybody has a  
19 car or could afford one. I wish was that easy to  
20 get a car. But yeah. So that's why.

21 MS. BARYLAK: Thank you for taking  
22 the time to bring that to our attention.

23 MS. GREENE: You're welcome.

24 MS. BARYLAK: So it's been entered in  
25 as part of the public record.

1                   MS. GREENE:   Okay.   Thank you so  
2 much.

3                   MS. BARYLAK:   You're welcome.

4                   MS. SAKALIK:   Thank you for coming  
5 out.

6                                       ---

7                   (WHEREUPON, A BREAK WAS HELD.)

8                                       ---

9                   MS. SAKALIK:   There are no remaining  
10 speakers registered to provide public comment at  
11 this public hearing who have not already provided  
12 their comments or were given the opportunity to  
13 provide their comments.   And we are now at the  
14 publicly advertised 7:00 p.m. end time for this  
15 hearing.

16                               So we will now conclude this public  
17 hearing and on behalf of PRT's Board and staff, I  
18 want to thank everyone who took the time to  
19 participate today and provide PRT with your comments  
20 regarding the proposed funding crisis related fiscal  
21 year 2026 fare increases and service reductions.

22                               Our third and final public hearing is  
23 scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on June 12th at the David L.  
24 Lawrence Convention.   This hearing is closed at  
25 7:00.

\* \* \* \* \*

HEARING CONCLUDED AT 7:00 P.M.

\* \* \* \* \*

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## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter,  
that the foregoing proceedings were taken  
stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to  
typewriting by me or under my direction; and that  
this transcript is a true and accurate record to the  
best of my ability.

Dated the 20th day of May, 2025

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin Morrow". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Benjamin Morrow,

Court Reporter

# Public Hearing 3

**Date: 6/12/2025**

**Location: Convention Center**

**Room: Main**

**Time: Morning**



PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED  
SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND FARE INCREASE

PUBLIC MEETING

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: Tom Burgunder, Member  
Jeffrey Devlin, Member  
Don Rivetti, Member  
Amy Silbermann, Member  
Donminika Brown, Member  
Jim Ritchie, Member  
Inez Colon, Member  
Charles Reeves, Member  
Mike Cetra, Solicitor

HEARING: Thursday, June 12, 2025  
9:05 a.m.

LOCATION: 1000 Fort Duquesne  
Boulevard  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Reporter: Chelsea Curry

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1 WITNESSES: Minna Lunney, Helen  
2 Sowinsky, Richard Water, William  
3 Harrison, Ross Mitchell, Matt Lohr,  
4 Susheela Nemani-Stanger, Francis  
5 Graham, Kristen Greene, Brian Rahuba,  
6 Dan Patel, Rebecca Aizupitis, Dr. D.  
7 Elizabeth Cohen, Hanna Theile, Rosa  
8 Ryoo, Dianne Ferrari, Patti Murphy,  
9 Eunice Turner Saunders, Steve Small,  
10 Alice Gabriel, Sarah Buranskas, Maria  
11 Cohen, Dave Haines, Leann McLaughlin,  
12 Brian Hatgelakas, Edith Bigus, Gail  
13 Dressler, Earl Westerlund, Amelie  
14 Colletti, Teaira Collins, Joan Ulicny,  
15 Donald Russell, Megan Patton, Jeanine  
16 L. DeBor, Seth Bush, Elizabeth  
17 Piccione, Em Duhamel, John Stinner,  
18 Christine Dyba, Christine Yockel,  
19 Sharon Sealey, Andrew Boykowycz,  
20 Christopher Watts, Kate Sanahan-Smith,  
21 Linda Warman, Melanie Holcomb, Khara  
22 Timsina, Amy Zaiss, James Fogarty,  
23 Janet Evans, Mary Matejevich, Carol  
24 Massengill, David White, Lydia Morin,  
25 Sarah Downing, Derek Dawson,

1 WITNESSES CONT'D: Danielle Wenner,  
2 Angela Wiley, Brian Hatgelakas, Annetta  
3 Butler, Ryan Matthews, Willie Kyte  
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## A P P E A R A N C E S

Michael Centra, Solicitor

Kelsey Shannon, Moderator

Karen Hoesch, ACCESS

## I N D E X

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES | 7 - 188 |
| CERTIFICATE              | 189     |

## E X H I B I T S

| <u>Number</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Page</u><br><u>Offered</u> |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
|               | NONE               | OFFERED                       |

## P R O C E E D I N G S

ATTORNEY CETRA:

So we're going to get started. My name is Mike Cetra. I am Chief Legal Officer for Pittsburgh Regional Transit. PRT is conducting this public hearing as part of a public comment period that 8:00 a.m. on Monday, March 31st, 2025 and will conclude on Wednesday, June 18th, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. to receive public input on PRT's proposed funding crisis, related fare increases and service reductions.

Before we begin to receive public comment, our hearing moderator, Kelsey Shannon, will go over some housekeeping information.

MS. SHANNON:

This hearing is being recorded and transcribed by a court reporter. If you do not want to be recorded, please exit the hearing room at this time.

Please note we have

1 American Sign Language and Spanish  
2 language interpreters to provide  
3 translation services during the hearing  
4 upon request.

5 For participants who  
6 registered to provide public comment at  
7 today's hearing, you will be called up  
8 to speak at your designated time, but  
9 you may be called up as much as 15  
10 minutes early to speak if there are no  
11 other speakers scheduled to speak.

12 For participants who did  
13 not pre-register, you have been placed  
14 into an open time slot to speak and  
15 will be called up to speak at your  
16 designated time, but you may be called  
17 up as much as 15 minutes early to speak  
18 if there are no other speakers  
19 scheduled to speak.

20 Each speaker will have  
21 three minutes to provide their public  
22 comment. When called upon, please  
23 clearly state your name and spell it  
24 and then speak clearly. The hearing  
25 moderator will alert you when you have



1       one minute remaining.

2                   If your three minutes is  
3       up and you want to provide further  
4       comment, you may do so via telephone,  
5       regular mail, or online until 5:00 p.m.  
6       Eastern Standard Time on Wednesday,  
7       June 18th, 2025.

8                   Additional details on  
9       these other methods to submit public  
10      comment to PRT regarding proposed  
11      funding prices related fiscal year 2026  
12      fare increases and service reductions  
13      is available on PRT's website at  
14      [www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis](http://www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis).

15                  Speakers cannot donate or  
16      delegate their allotted time to another  
17      individual interested in speaking, but  
18      speakers may read in written comments  
19      that they may have brought with them on  
20      behalf of another individual during  
21      their scheduled comment time.

22                  The purpose of this  
23      public hearing is for PRT to receive  
24      public comment only. Participating PRT  
25      Board members and/or staff members will

1 not respond to public comment provided  
2 during this hearing, but all comments  
3 will be recorded and analyzed as a part  
4 of the public comment collection  
5 process.

6 Additionally, there's an  
7 information table set up outside the  
8 hearing room where PRT staff can answer  
9 questions. Both PRT Board members and  
10 senior management will be listening to  
11 public comments during this public  
12 hearing.

13 At this time, I would ask  
14 PRT Board members who are in attendance  
15 to identify themselves.

16 MR. BURGUNDER:

17 Tom Burgunder.

18 MS. SHANNON:

19 I would now ask PRT  
20 management who are in attendance to  
21 identify themselves.

22 MR. REEVES:

23 I'm Charles Reeves, Chief  
24 Transportation Officer.

25 MS. BROWN:

1 Donminika Brown, Chief  
2 Financial Officer.

3 MR. RITCHIE:

4 I'm Jim Richie, I'm the  
5 Chief Communications Officer.

6 ATTORNEY CETRA:

7 Mike Cetra, Chief Legal  
8 Officer.

9 MS. SILBERMANN:

10 Amy Silbermann, Chief  
11 Development Officer.

12 MS. COLON:

13 Inez Colon, Chief Human  
14 Resources Officer.

15 MR. RIVETTI:

16 I'm Don Rivetti, Chief  
17 Maintenance Officer.

18 MS. HOESCH:

19 Karen Hoesch, ACCESS  
20 Transportation.

21 MS. SHANNON:

22 This public hearing was  
23 scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
24 and 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a two  
25 hour break from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

1 and PRT intends to conduct the public  
2 hearing for the entire advertised time  
3 periods to ensure members of the public  
4 who did not pre-register but appear  
5 today and sign up to speak have an  
6 opportunity to do so.

7 ATTORNEY CETRA:

8 Thank you, Kelsey.

9 As an additional state  
10 funding PRT is facing an operating  
11 budget deficit of approximately \$100  
12 million for its fiscal year 2026. PRT  
13 is required by law to pass a balanced  
14 budget. And with so many fixed costs  
15 we are proposing a 35 percent reduction  
16 in bus, light rail and incline  
17 services. If approved by PRT's Board,  
18 these changes will begin with PRT's  
19 February 2026 service adjustments along  
20 with the 25 cent fare increase and  
21 related fare increases to other fare  
22 products.

23 Additionally, due to the  
24 severity of the budget deficit,  
25 corresponding reductions to service

1 levels and increases in fares are also  
2 being proposed for PRT's sponsored  
3 paratransit program ACCESS. This  
4 program provides demand response  
5 transportation services for eligible  
6 individuals with disabilities and  
7 senior citizens in Allegheny County.

8 A summary of the proposed  
9 funding crisis related FY2026 fare  
10 increases and service reductions is  
11 available on PRT's website at  
12 [rideprt.org/funding-crisis](http://rideprt.org/funding-crisis) and there  
13 also are pamphlets out front that  
14 contain this information.

15 We will now begin to  
16 receive public comment with our first  
17 speaker.

18 MS. SHANNON:

19 Our first speaker is  
20 Minna Lunney.

21 MS. LUNNEY:

22 Good morning. My first  
23 name is Minna, M-I-N-N-A ---.

24 ATTORNEY CETRA:

25 Sorry, give us one sec

1 here while we --- we're making our way  
2 up here to get the mic on.

3 Just want to remind  
4 everybody when you come up to speak  
5 please spell your name and if you could  
6 just let us know what neighborhood  
7 you're from, we'd appreciate it.

8 MS. LUNNEY:

9 Hello, my name is Minna  
10 Lunney, M-I-N-N-A, L-U-N-N-E-Y. My zip  
11 code is 15206.

12 Good morning. I am a  
13 freelance writer currently looking for  
14 full time work. I live alone and don't  
15 own a car. With my home at the border  
16 of Shadyside and East Liberty, I'm  
17 blessed to have a number of things  
18 within walking distance when I'm  
19 healthy such as the gym, the library,  
20 the grocery store and the pharmacy.

21 I depend on bus routes  
22 like the P1, 75, 82 and 86 for job  
23 interviews and networking events, going  
24 to church, attending Pirates games,  
25 visiting friends, exploring new parts

1 of the City and going to the large list  
2 of doctors I see on annual basis.

3 Even when I'm healthy, I  
4 need the bus to do regular blood  
5 testing throughout the year. Last  
6 winter, I broke my elbow and needed to  
7 go to occupational therapy on a weekly  
8 basis. Whenever I'm lucky enough to  
9 travel, the 28X reliably gets me to the  
10 airport and ensures I have a ride home,  
11 even if my flight's delayed past  
12 midnight and the rest of the airport is  
13 closed.

14 If the proposed service  
15 cuts occur next year, my involvement in  
16 the community and the economy will  
17 shrink as well. When there's no P1  
18 service to take me home after a late  
19 game at PNC Park, when the luck of the  
20 hour of my arrival determines whether I  
21 have a ride home from the airport.  
22 Those are unfortunate scenarios, sure,  
23 but easy to shrug off.

24 Well, what about when I  
25 can't apply to a job because there's no

1 way for me to reach the employer by  
2 bus? What if I can't get to the doctor  
3 who needs to renew the prescription  
4 that I must take every day or else risk  
5 having a seizure? Now we're talking  
6 about lives and livelihoods on the  
7 line.

8 It's so important for our  
9 whole community that bus service isn't  
10 gutted, but rather expanded. I don't  
11 see fare increases as the way forward  
12 on that. You're seeking money from  
13 people who don't have it to give.

14 What I rather see in  
15 place of fare increases is a  
16 Pennsylvania state budget that fully  
17 funds public transit statewide. This  
18 can be done if it were treated as a  
19 requirement, one of our top priorities,  
20 not as a target or an afterthought.

21 When that happens, we  
22 have the opportunity to make more  
23 routes and have more buses showing up  
24 more frequently than ever. We deserve  
25 a public transit service so good that



1 people choose it ahead of anything  
2 else.

3 Please do everything you  
4 can to maintain or expand service  
5 without increasing cost. Thank you  
6 very much for your attention.

7 ATTORNEY CETRA:

8 Thank you.

9 MS. SHANNON:

10 Our next speaker is Helen  
11 Sowinsky.

12 MS. SOWINSKY:

13 Good morning. My name is  
14 Helen Sowinsky. The spelling on the  
15 name is H-E-L-E-N, S-O-W-I-N-S-K-Y. My  
16 zip code is 15211.

17 I am a senior citizen. I  
18 work. And if the 43 daily is cut, I  
19 have no way to get to work. I have no  
20 way to get to doctor's appointments and  
21 pick up medications. I have --- it  
22 will be very difficult for me, a  
23 hardship for me to get out to buy  
24 groceries. And also going to --- I'm  
25 sorry. Going to recreational

1 activities would be nearly impossible.

2 I live in a senior  
3 citizen high rise. Many of the folks  
4 who share the building with me are  
5 finding themselves to be in a similar  
6 state to me.

7 So again, I would ask  
8 that you strongly consider the effect  
9 that this will have on the ridership  
10 and go from there. Thank you very  
11 much.

12 ATTORNEY CETRA:

13 Thank you.

14 MS. SHANNON:

15 Our next speaker is  
16 Richard Walter.

17 MR. WALTER:

18 My name is Richard  
19 Walter, W-A-L-T-E-R. I'm from Bethel  
20 Park and I take the Silver Line and I'm  
21 on dialysis two days a week. I like to  
22 go to the malls and other stuff,  
23 doctors appointments and all that. If  
24 I don't have the Silver Line, I  
25 wouldn't be able to go to where I'm

1       supposed to go on my appointments. So  
2       especially at dialysis and it would be  
3       too far to walk. And if they quit the  
4       Silver Line it's too far to walk from  
5       Bethel Park to Logan Road to Washington  
6       Junction.

7               So I have to have the  
8       line still be going so I can still be  
9       able to go places even if go down to  
10      South Park shops, I'd have to walk down  
11      to South Park Road. If I didn't have  
12      that, I wouldn't be able to get down to  
13      the shops down there.

14             So I have to have transportation  
15      to get to all my destinations. So I  
16      hope they keep the Silver Line going  
17      and keep all the other transportations  
18      going so I can still get around. Thank  
19      you very much.

20                     ATTORNEY CETRA:

21                     Thank you, Richard.

22                     MR. WALTERS:

23                     You're welcome.

24                     MS. SHANNON:

25                     William Harrison.

1                   MR. HARRISON:

2                   My name is William  
3                   Harrison, H-A-R-R-I-S-O-N.

4                   First of all, how many of  
5                   you up there rely on public  
6                   transportation? Raise your hand. I  
7                   hope that means more than your  
8                   paycheck.

9                   I was 15 years old in  
10                  1966 when public transportation in  
11                  Pittsburgh shut down its trolley  
12                  system. To the best of my knowledge,  
13                  any major metropolitan area in this  
14                  country that had a trolley system at  
15                  that time and kept it running is in  
16                  better shape than we are.

17                  I'm speaking on behalf of  
18                  my children and my grandchildren. I'm  
19                  a senior citizens. I may not be around  
20                  much longer. But difficulty is not a  
21                  reason to do the right thing. And the  
22                  right thing for Pittsburgh is electric  
23                  public transportation, not battery  
24                  operated electric transportation. But  
25                  our trolley system which we never

1       should have shut down.

2                       Personally, if my life  
3       were on the line, I don't need the  
4       trolley system. I'm the windmill  
5       recipient of the Tiffany's Award from  
6       the Pittsburgh Marathon awarded me in  
7       2015. I ran the first 28 Pittsburgh  
8       Marathons without training on a very  
9       bad leg. I will get where I have to  
10      go, difficult as it may be.

11                      So I implore you to do  
12      the right thing and start the process  
13      of bringing our trolley system back and  
14      increasing service because that's the  
15      only way Pittsburgh and Allegheny  
16      County is going to thrive. Thank you.

17                      ATTORNEY CETRA:

18                      Thank you, Will.

19                      MS. SHANNON:

20                      Next we have Ross

21      Mitchell.

22                      MR. MITCHELL:

23                      Hi, my name is Ross  
24      Mitchell. R-O-S-S, M-I-T-C-H-E-L-L.  
25      My zip code is 15 --- 15104.

1                   First I want to apologize  
2                   for a statement I made because I didn't  
3                   study this carefully when I was here in  
4                   April and I got a chance to re-respond  
5                   to something I heard from another  
6                   participant.

7                   The 28X and --- and also  
8                   I said this on the local talk radio.  
9                   Thank you for not completely cutting  
10                  out the 28X. That's great.

11                  Also, I heard the rules  
12                  that you can't comment or participate.  
13                  Thank you for responding to that  
14                  gentleman's question about any of you  
15                  using the system. That's great to see.

16                  But I do want to repeat  
17                  something I did say in April. No  
18                  service after 11:00, that is not a  
19                  viable transit system. Even though we  
20                  have many problems here in Pittsburgh.  
21                  I think it would be great.

22                  I also will repeat  
23                  something that's very distasteful. If  
24                  you could please maintain service after  
25                  11:00. And since you are increasing

1 the fare, we'd gripe less if we had  
2 11:00 service after, but maybe go to  
3 instead of 25 cent increase it'd be 35  
4 cent. I know that's ---.

5 But I really hope that  
6 the next time there's a service meeting  
7 in Harrisburg, someone from the Board  
8 or PRT officially will participate in  
9 that. Because the Commonwealth of  
10 Pennsylvania needs a dedicated funding  
11 source for the public transit systems  
12 of the state. And even though it's not  
13 talked about very much, we understand,  
14 most of us, that a public transit  
15 system is not a public money making  
16 entity. It's a public service.

17 So please get on  
18 Harrisburg. We need dedicated funding.  
19 We need service after 11:00. This is  
20 Pittsburgh. Some of you are old timers  
21 and understand we do not want to go  
22 back to rolling up the carpet and  
23 closing the door at 5:00 downtown.  
24 It's just not going to work. Thank  
25 you.

1                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

2                   Thank you, Ross.

3                   MS. SHANNON:

4                   Matt Lohr.

5                   MR. LOHR:

6                   Hi, my name is Matt Lohr,  
7                   M-A-T-T, L-O-H-R. My zip code is  
8                   15207.

9                   Some of you in this room  
10                  may have already met me. I'm a box  
11                  office representative for the  
12                  Pittsburgh Cultural Trust. Which means  
13                  if you've had a chance to come down to  
14                  one of our theaters here in the  
15                  Cultural District, it may have been me  
16                  that was helping you out with  
17                  purchasing or picking up tickets for a  
18                  show.

19                  And I'm here to remind  
20                  you that those shows that you come down  
21                  to see, they don't float down perfect  
22                  and gossamer like on a cloud. There's  
23                  a lot of people behind the curtain that  
24                  help to make that magic happen for you.  
25                  Stagehands, maintenance crew, ushers,



1 box office personnel like myself. And  
2 these people are not superstars in a  
3 spotlight. Some of them are students.  
4 Some of them work part time. These are  
5 salt of the earth people. This is the  
6 working class.

7 And when PRT announced  
8 these proposed changes and cuts, I had  
9 serious conversations with a lot of my  
10 colleagues. People afraid about how  
11 these cuts could impede their ability  
12 to make it to town to help put on these  
13 performances for you to enjoy. People  
14 like myself who will lose all of the  
15 lines that go from their neighborhood  
16 to town to help them make it here to  
17 put on these shows for you.

18 We all know what the  
19 Pittsburgh cultural Trust is worth to  
20 the lifeblood of this city. We know  
21 it's worth at least \$31 million, which  
22 is the allocation for the Arts Landing  
23 development, which is currently at work  
24 a few blocks from this room that we're  
25 all in right now.

1                   So I hope that we can  
2           create a possibility that there will  
3           not be a chance of you to come down one  
4           day for a show at the Benedum Center  
5           and find a completely dark theater  
6           because the people who know how to make  
7           the lights work down there can't get to  
8           work anymore. Or you come to the Heinz  
9           Hall and have a performer shouting  
10          themselves hoarse from the stage  
11          because the people who know how to  
12          operate the sound can't make it in work  
13          anymore.

14                   Or if you show up at the  
15          biome and just can't get into the  
16          building because people like me aren't  
17          here to help you with a lost or damaged  
18          or misplaced ticket because I can't get  
19          to work anymore. Or if you just come  
20          down and all theaters are just locked  
21          up tight because the people behind the  
22          scenes that make those shows happen  
23          just can't make it into work anymore.

24                   I'm not here officially  
25          on behalf of the Cultural Trust, but I

1 am speaking for the heart and spirit of  
2 a lot of those people to say that we  
3 are trusting in you to help keep PRT  
4 and help keep the Pittsburgh Cultural  
5 Trust part of the vital lifeblood that  
6 makes the city as great to live in as  
7 it is.

8 So we hope that you will  
9 do the right thing. We do have our  
10 eyes on you. Thank you very much.

11 ATTORNEY CETRA:

12 Thank you, Matt.

13 MS. SHANNON:

14 Susheela Nemani-Stanger.

15 MS. NEMANI-STANGER:

16 Good morning. My first  
17 name is Susheela, S-U-S-H-E-E-L-A.  
18 Last name is Nemani-Stanger. That's  
19 N-E-M-A-N-I, hyphen S-T-A-N-G-E-R.

20 I'm the executive  
21 director of the urban Redevelopment  
22 Authority. If you're not aware, the  
23 URA is the economic development  
24 enterprise for the City of Pittsburgh.  
25 Our mission is to advance inclusive

1 growth throughout the city, and we've  
2 been doing this for nearly 79 years.

3 We have worked closely  
4 with the Port Authority for over five  
5 decades. Our work has resulted --- Our  
6 work together has resulted in transit  
7 infrastructure funding for projects  
8 like First Avenue T station and the  
9 East Liberty Busway. That's just to  
10 name two of many.

11 The Port Authority, with  
12 their service and capital projects,  
13 have helped unlock crucial sites for  
14 our region's economic growth. Without  
15 the Port Authority, people around the  
16 city would not be able to get to where  
17 they need to live, work and play in  
18 efficient manners.

19 Even if you don't ride  
20 transit, you benefit from transit.  
21 Public transit allows us at the URA to  
22 advance community and infrastructure  
23 investments that unlock density and  
24 mobility.

25 Basic investments in

1 walkability, density and transit are  
2 what allow city neighborhoods to be  
3 vibrant places to live and very  
4 attractive places to live. These  
5 investments connect neighborhoods,  
6 build communities, and allow for  
7 sustained relationships that keep  
8 people working and housed. By  
9 investing in public transit, we're  
10 investing in the people of Pittsburgh  
11 and we're investing in what makes our  
12 region competitive.

13 The URA and the Port  
14 Authority share a common belief, which  
15 is that together we can make Pittsburgh  
16 a better place for people to live. We  
17 believe that with strong businesses,  
18 quality housing and robust transit, we  
19 can create economic opportunities for  
20 every Pittsburgher.

21 Simply put, we cannot  
22 afford to build a city that prioritizes  
23 parking and single occupancy vehicles.  
24 New structured parking costs exceed  
25 \$30,000 per space, and if you look at

1 underground structured parking, that  
2 cost nearly doubles to \$60,000 per  
3 space.

4 It is crucial that we  
5 invest in public transit, housing,  
6 parks and other community  
7 infrastructure to build a resilient  
8 city. Dependable and consistent  
9 investment in transit and related  
10 community development is needed to  
11 ensure access to community access As  
12 reinvestment continues to occur  
13 throughout our city. PRT needs a  
14 dependable and consistent strong source  
15 of funding that helps grow our city.  
16 Thank you.

17 ATTORNEY CETRA:

18 Thank you, Susheela.

19 MS. SHANNON:

20 Francis Graham.

21 MR. GRAHAM:

22 I'm Francis Graham,  
23 G-R-A-H-A-M. I live in East Pittsburgh  
24 15112. I am retired Emeritus faculty  
25 from Penn State. I retired to East

1       Pittsburgh.

2                       I just come here to maybe  
3       say that there must be hidden solutions  
4       to this very complex problem involving  
5       infrastructure, property rights,  
6       personnel, retirements, everything in  
7       this \$100 million shortfall. Are all  
8       possible solutions exhausted?

9                       And the reason I think  
10       that is important is because Pittsburgh  
11       itself, ever since the days of wooden  
12       streetcars, it grew up around public  
13       transit. It's not like Los Angeles,  
14       where the automobile predominated all  
15       through its development. This town,  
16       you know, from wooden streetcars to PCC  
17       cars to buses and bus lanes and now  
18       light rail and also experiments with  
19       things like sky bus and the Maglev  
20       Project.

21                      This town grew up around  
22       mass transit and public transit. It  
23       would be like ripping an organ out, a  
24       vital organ out of a body for  
25       Pittsburgh to suffer major declines in

1 public transit. There's no, there's no  
2 light parking alternatives except  
3 expensive, you know.

4 So I was inspired to  
5 these comments by a book by Ezra Klein  
6 and Derek Thompson called Abundance  
7 that says sometimes the solution to  
8 problems is not in shuttering and  
9 closing things, but instead  
10 re-innovating things that's in a sort  
11 of out of the box way.

12 And again, they're very  
13 complex problems that no doubt are  
14 there, but it's Wiki's book  
15 Morphological Methods by Fritz Wiki,  
16 the astrophysicist says that there are  
17 often many solutions that are hidden  
18 and we don't think of until, oh, wow, I  
19 could have done that.

20 So that's --- I just ---  
21 I'm just saying, I'm sure you have  
22 spent many, many, many, many, many  
23 hours thinking what could be done.  
24 What could be done.

25 ATTORNEY CETRA:



1                   Thank you, Francis. Your  
2 time is up, but if we have open slots  
3 later, you're welcome to sign up if you  
4 have more comment for us.

5                   MR. GRAHAM:

6                   Thank you. Thank you. I  
7 am --- thank you for this opportunity.

8                   MS. SHANNON:

9                   Next we have Brian  
10 Rahuba.

11                  MR. RAHUBA:

12                  Hello, how are you today?

13                  ATTORNEY CETRA:

14                  Good morning, Brian.

15                  Brian, you can go right to the mic at  
16 the table there. Yeah, take your time.

17                  MR. RAHUBA:

18                  I wasn't going to speak  
19 today, but I have a neighbor that she's  
20 75 years old. She comes over my house  
21 and has a cup of tea with me every  
22 week. And she depends on just regular  
23 PAT Transit. She goes all around the  
24 city on PAT Transit, goes to all these  
25 --- we live in the East End, but she

1 goes to all these different places,  
2 grocery store, all these --- she's  
3 constantly using the PRT. What's she  
4 going to do when, you know, you ---  
5 they cut lines. You know, she depends  
6 on that to go to the grocery store and  
7 everything else. That's her lifeline.

8 And then for me, I take  
9 ACCESS. The rate cuts won't affect me  
10 so much because I, you know, I'm fine  
11 with that, but the --- I mean, but  
12 other people can't afford it. And  
13 also, you know, if you start cutting  
14 service, how can people get to work and  
15 stuff like that?

16 Like the lady was telling  
17 me, if they cut a PAT Transit bus ride  
18 at 8:00, then access service to that  
19 area stops at 8:00 p.m. too, well what  
20 if you work out there? Then you're ---  
21 you know, you're screwed. Pardon your  
22 thing.

23 And the other thing is,  
24 you know, I understand there's problems  
25 with funding and stuff, but public

1        transportation should be, you know, an  
2        easy one, basically. Because that  
3        helps like the other gentleman was  
4        saying, generate the economy.

5                        So if you have people  
6        that don't --- can't take a bus or take  
7        ACCESS, then they sit at home and then  
8        they're not spending their money. And  
9        it's also a health concern because then  
10       they just sit at home and do nothing.  
11       And, you know, that's all I wanted to  
12       say. Thank you.

13                       ATTORNEY CETRA:

14                       Thank you, Brian. Brian,  
15       could you ask about your last name for  
16       us, please?

17                       MR. RAHUBA:

18                       Sure. Rahuba,  
19       R-A-H-U-B-A.

20                       ATTORNEY CETRA:

21                       Thank you.

22                       MR. RAHUBA:

23                       First name is Brian,  
24       B-R-I-A-N. Thank you.

25                       ATTORNEY CETRA:

1 Thank you.

2 MS. SHANNON:

3 Next we have Kristen  
4 Greene.

5 MS. GREENE:

6 Good morning. My name is  
7 Kristin Greene. K-R-I-S-T-E-N,  
8 G-R-E-E-N-E. And I'm here today to  
9 express my deep concerns and  
10 oppositions to the proposed cuts for  
11 the bus services here in Pittsburgh.

12 As a citizen who depends  
13 on mass transit to get to work, these  
14 changes will really have a negative  
15 impact not only on myself, but on the  
16 community at large, especially for  
17 residents who rely on public  
18 transportation as their means for  
19 transportation for work, school,  
20 medical appointments or other  
21 institutional destinations.

22 Each day, hundreds, if  
23 not thousands of individuals rely on a  
24 bus system. Public transportation is  
25 not a luxury. It's a lifeline for so

1 many people. And reducing or  
2 eliminating routes will isolate many  
3 members of our community.

4 Public transportation  
5 plays an important role in reducing  
6 traffic congestions. Cutting service  
7 would affect these with the largest ---  
8 with a few alternatives and make it so  
9 much harder to get where they need to  
10 go.

11 I urge you to reconsider  
12 these proposed cuts and explore  
13 alternative solutions such as  
14 resources, seeking additional funding  
15 or engaging the community in a more  
16 collaborative planning process.

17 Our public system must be  
18 protected and strengthened and not  
19 taken away from the city of Pittsburgh.  
20 Instead of reducing routes or cutting,  
21 we should be expanding service,  
22 increasing frequency, and making  
23 transit more affordable and acceptable  
24 for everyone. Thank you.

25 ATTORNEY CETRA:

1 Thank you, Kristen.

2 MS. SHANNON:

3 Dan Patel.

4 MR. PATEL:

5 Hi, everyone. My name is  
6 Daniel Patel. Daniel spelled normal,  
7 Patel, P-A-T-E-L. I live in  
8 Bloomfield.

9 I've been a resident of  
10 Bloomfield for five years. Recently  
11 completed three years working as a  
12 social worker at Allegheny General  
13 Hospital. I'm here to emphasize the  
14 critical importance of maintaining and  
15 really expanding compared to where  
16 we're at right now, public transit  
17 funding in our region.

18 As a hospital social  
19 worker, my job was to help remove  
20 barriers that prevent people from  
21 accessing health care and Living  
22 healthy, stable lives. I worked with  
23 patients not only from Allegheny  
24 County, but also from surrounding areas  
25 in West Virginia, Ohio, New York and

1       beyond. You know, we're a massive  
2       hospital. People flying from 100 miles  
3       away when they have things, so we see  
4       what people's lives are like, what  
5       resources they have access to 100 miles  
6       away.

7               `Regardless of where  
8       people live, I can say with confidence  
9       that transportation is almost always  
10      one of the most persistent and  
11      difficult barriers to care, to being  
12      able to access the foundations of a  
13      healthy life.

14              PRT and ACCESS have made  
15      Allegheny County far more navigable  
16      than many other places. But even in  
17      the current situation, before these  
18      proposed cuts, our transit system fell  
19      far short of ensuring reliable access  
20      to jobs, health care, and other  
21      necessities. At best, the current  
22      system was at least sometimes enough to  
23      help people hold a life together  
24      without significant help from friends,  
25      family, and helpful neighbors, all of

1       which are privileges many of us in this  
2       city do not have.

3               The proposed reductions  
4       would turn this system into a hollow  
5       shell of a service, making it fully  
6       insufficient to get people reliably to  
7       where they need to go. This would lead  
8       to increased unemployment and  
9       underemployment, reduced access to  
10      food, medications, preventative care,  
11      and greater social isolation.

12             The communities hit  
13      hardest will be those already facing  
14      the greatest challenges. Our neighbors  
15      living in poverty, with disabilities,  
16      or in areas impacted by environmental  
17      hazard and neighborhood disinvestment.

18             And of course, making  
19      this service even more ineffective  
20      would directly lead to even steeper  
21      losses of users and income for PRT.  
22      It's a downward spiral when what we  
23      need is the funding to increase  
24      services and turn PRT into something  
25      that more and more people can reliably



1 use in their day to day life.

2 I know that the  
3 administrators at PRT are as clear as I  
4 am that enacting these service cuts  
5 would mark a bleak turning point for  
6 public transport in our city.

7 Pittsburgh has been on a  
8 path of revitalization for decades, but  
9 true progress can only happen when all  
10 residents have the opportunity to  
11 thrive. Public transit is not a  
12 luxury. It's a foundational element of  
13 a healthy, equitable and flourishing  
14 city.

15 Hospitals have embraced  
16 social work not out of idealism, I can  
17 tell you that for sure, but because the  
18 data shows that the costliest health  
19 outcomes arise when people lack access  
20 to the basic building blocks of well  
21 being. And so we're there to do the  
22 things that doctors and nurses can't  
23 do. And most of the time, we fail  
24 because of the society we live in.

25 The same is true in

1 public policy --- take a little bit  
2 longer. Failing to fund accessible  
3 transit will ultimately cost the city  
4 and state far more than any short term  
5 savings these cuts may offer. Thank  
6 you all.

7 ATTORNEY CETRA:

8 Thank you, Dan.

9 MS. SHANNON:

10 Dr. D. Elizabeth Cohen.

11 DR. COHEN:

12 Good morning. My name is  
13 Dr. D. Elizabeth Cohen. I'm a cancer  
14 survivor. I came to Pittsburgh a  
15 little over a year ago invited by a  
16 friend to recover after my cancer  
17 surgery and I liked it so much here  
18 that I stayed.

19 The things that I liked  
20 about it were the quality of life,  
21 cultural resources, medical care,  
22 opportunities to get involved and  
23 participate in all different areas of  
24 life. And what's made my life in  
25 Carnegie possible to access neighboring

1 resources is the bus system and ACCESS.

2 I have lived and worked  
3 all around the world and in many places  
4 in the United States and my comparative  
5 estimation of PRT and ACCESS as it is  
6 today is that it's really mediocre.  
7 Buses are too infrequent. There are  
8 missing buses sometimes. Sometimes I  
9 can't get ACCESS rides for even medical  
10 appointments.

11 So for the sake of the  
12 quality of life in Pittsburgh,  
13 transportation must be improved and  
14 definitely not cut.

15 In my estimation, public  
16 transportation is vitally important for  
17 the public good to improve the  
18 environment, to allow youth from all  
19 neighborhoods to access opportunities,  
20 to manifest their potential, to provide  
21 seniors with the ability to meet their  
22 own needs, contribute to their  
23 communities and live as independently  
24 as possible. Public transportation is  
25 an opportunity equalizer and

1       fundamental to a positive society that  
2       supports its citizens' well-being. So  
3       thank you.

4                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

5                   Thank you Dr. Cohen.

6                   MS. SHANNON:

7                   All right, I'm going to  
8       repeat some instructions because we're  
9       a little bit ahead. Want to make sure  
10      each speaker is here when we have them  
11      slotted.

12                  So just as a reminder,  
13      each speaker will have three minutes to  
14      provide their public comment. When  
15      called upon, please clearly state your  
16      name and spell it, then speak clearly.  
17      The hearing moderator will alert you  
18      when you have one minute remaining.

19                  If your three minutes is  
20      up and you want to provide further  
21      comment, you may do so via telephone,  
22      regular mail or online until 5:00 p.m.  
23      Eastern Standard Time on Wednesday,  
24      18th, 2025.

25                  Additional details on

1       these other methods to submit public  
2       comment to PRT regarding the proposed  
3       funding crisis related to fiscal year  
4       2026 fare increases and service  
5       reductions is available on PRT's  
6       website at [www.rideprt.org/funding-](http://www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis)  
7       crisis.

8                       Our next speaker is  
9       Rebecca Aizupitis. Apologize for  
10      potentially mispronouncing your last  
11      name there.

12                      Rebecca?

13                      All right, we'll loop  
14      back to Rebecca. Hannah Thiel.

15                      MS. THIELE:

16                      Good morning. My name is  
17      Hanna, H-A-N-N-A, last name Thiele,  
18      T-H-E-I-L-E.

19                      Good morning. My name is  
20      Hannah and I've been riding the bus in  
21      Pittsburgh for the past six years as a  
22      student, a part time worker and someone  
23      who does not own a car. For me, the  
24      bus has never just been about  
25      transportation. It's a part of my

1       daily routine, my safety net, and how  
2       --- my connection to the city. It's  
3       how I get to class, to work shifts, to  
4       job interviews and home after dark.  
5       It's allowed me to live, learn, and  
6       earn in Pittsburgh.

7                       And along the way, I've  
8       come to know the people who ride with  
9       me. I've seen the same faces on the  
10      same routes for years. The man who  
11      gets off in Oakland to teach, the  
12      grandmother heading to church in East  
13      Liberty. The nursing student who  
14      studies between stops. We may not know  
15      each other's names, but there's quite a  
16      sense of community and dignity in  
17      sharing the space every day.

18                      Cutting services doesn't  
19      just disrupt schedules, it breaks the  
20      network of support. It forces people  
21      to wait longer, walk further, or stop  
22      riding altogether. And for those of us  
23      who do not have another option, it adds  
24      stress and uncertainty to our daily  
25      lives.

1                   Beyond that, investing in  
2 transit is one of the most sustainable  
3 choices we can make. Buses reduce  
4 traffic, lower emissions, and make our  
5 region more resilient to climate  
6 change. If we're serious about  
7 sustainability, we cannot afford to  
8 take steps backwards.

9                   Public transit is not  
10 expendable. It's the foundation that  
11 lets people like me build a life here.  
12 It keeps Pittsburgh connected across  
13 neighborhoods, across incomes, and  
14 across generations. Please do not take  
15 that away. Please protect PRT and the  
16 people who rely on it. Thank you.

17                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

18                   Thank you, Hanna.

19                   MS. SHANNON:

20                   Try again for Rebecca  
21 Aizupitis.

22                   MS. AIZUPITIS:

23                   Should I --- do I need to  
24 repeat my name again?

25                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

1                   If you could just spell  
2                   your last name for us.

3                   MS. AIZUPITIS:

4                   Spell the last name, yes.

5                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

6                   Yeah. And you can go  
7                   ahead.

8                   MS. AIZUPITIS:

9                   My last name is  
10                  Aizupitis. A as in apple, I-Z as in  
11                  zebra, U-P as in Peter, I-T as in Tom,  
12                  I-S as in Sam.

13                  ATTORNEY CETRA:

14                  Thank you.

15                  MS. AIZUPITIS:

16                  The last person who spoke  
17                  was so eloquent. I have nothing  
18                  prepared other than I came because I  
19                  want to speak up for people who  
20                  couldn't get here today because they're  
21                  working or because the buses don't run  
22                  very frequently, even right now. And I  
23                  am so grateful to live in this city.  
24                  And I feel that we all have a serious  
25                  responsibility to support people who



1       need this way to get to work, who need  
2       this way to get home, who need this way  
3       of public transport to survive. Thank  
4       you for all your good work.

5                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

6                   Thank you, Rebecca.

7                   MS. SHANNON:

8                   Rosa Ryoo.

9                   Rosa?

10                  MS. RYOO:

11                  Hello. My name is Rosa  
12       Ryoo. Last name is R-Y-O-O.

13                  So I ride the --- my name  
14       is Rosa. I live in Southside. I've  
15       been living in Pittsburgh since 2009,  
16       and have been relying on the public  
17       transit since then.

18                  I ride the 54, the 81,  
19       the 83 to work in Oakland. I have the  
20       luxury of having my own vehicle and  
21       able bodied to ride my bike. But not  
22       everyone has that. I'm here today for  
23       the people of Pittsburgh and Allegheny  
24       County who rely on public transit 100  
25       percent.

1                   How will people get to  
2                   work if their neighborhood doesn't have  
3                   a bus coming through? This will  
4                   directly and significantly impact their  
5                   livelihoods. What about all the extra  
6                   cars on the road for those who are able  
7                   to drive? What is that going to do for  
8                   our environment and traffic?

9                   You want to significantly  
10                  reduce the remaining lines and up the  
11                  fare to \$3. Like a bus completing its  
12                  route, I will go back to where I  
13                  started. At the end of the day, I will  
14                  be okay, quote, unquote. It is the  
15                  members of my community that will not.  
16                  And that's why I'm here today to fight  
17                  for them to oppose the proposal cuts.  
18                  Thank you.

19                  ATTORNEY CETRA:

20                  Thank you.

21                  MS. SHANNON:

22                  Diane Ferrari.

23                  MS. FERRARI:

24                  I'm here for the people  
25                  who take the 41 who are senior

1 citizens. Many of us rely on that bus  
2 because the trolley stop at Mount  
3 Lebanon are too far away for the senior  
4 citizens to walk. We need the 41. So  
5 thank you for the --- for your  
6 consideration to us and to all the  
7 people take the 41. Thank you.

8 ATTORNEY CETRA:

9 Thank you, Diane.

10 MS. SHANNON:

11 Patti Murphy.

12 MS. MURPHY:

13 Good morning. My name is  
14 Patti Murphy. P-A-T-T-I. Patti with  
15 an I, Murphy. M-U-R-P-H-Y. I live in  
16 Bethel Park and the zip code is 15241.

17 Taking public transit is  
18 one of the best habits, the best  
19 lasting habits I formed during my 64  
20 years on this earth. As a little girl,  
21 I rode the bus or streetcar downtown  
22 with my mom, grandma and sisters. I  
23 kept the habit going as a teenager to  
24 meet friends under Kaufman's Clock.  
25 Then as a working adult and through my

1 recent retirement.

2 With my disabilities, I  
3 never learned to drive. Thank goodness  
4 for public transit. It's how I got  
5 here this morning. Still, my husband,  
6 friends and relatives are generous when  
7 I need a ride somewhere. Many more  
8 people are not so lucky. So they plan  
9 their lives around bus and trolley  
10 schedules, T schedules.

11 Whether it's ultimately  
12 up to PRT or state government or both,  
13 restoring service, keeping service at  
14 pre pandemic levels is not too much for  
15 passengers to ask. We are the fifth  
16 most populous state. More people call  
17 Pennsylvania home than --- more people  
18 over 65 call Pennsylvania home than in  
19 40 other states. And at any given  
20 time, 25 percent of our residents are  
21 living with disabilities.

22 What you're proposing  
23 would be an embarrassment, unacceptable  
24 and sadly deadly to our communities.  
25 More to say, but I'll end it.

1                   Mass transit is a  
2                   traditional public service, not a  
3                   controversy. You must find a way to  
4                   save it. Now, please, let's not leave  
5                   anyone stranded. Thank you.

6                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

7                   Thank you, Patti.

8                   MS. SHANNON:

9                   Eunice Turner Sanders.

10                  MS. SANDERS:

11                  Good morning. My name is  
12                  Eunice, E-U-N-I-C-E, Turner,  
13                  T-U-R-N-E-R, Saunders, S-A-U-N-D-E-R-S.

14                  I'm 85 years of age and  
15                  I've been in Pittsburgh all of my life.  
16                  I rode the streetcar. When I was a  
17                  little girl the trolley where the man  
18                  would go from one end to the other  
19                  would go up and down the street. So  
20                  that just tells you something.

21                  Anyway, this is my third  
22                  protest. I called on the telephone to  
23                  get a schedule and I told the lady, but  
24                  I didn't know if she fully understood  
25                  what I was saying.

1                   I wrote a letter which  
2           hopefully you got. It was like four  
3           pages on yellow paper, but I was out  
4           --- but I was out of town when I did  
5           that. So I had a little time to do  
6           that. But I mailed it from Pittsburgh.  
7           Thank you for receiving that. I'm not  
8           really a tech person so I got to talk  
9           on the phone, I got to write, whatever.

10                   I do understand your  
11           problems financially. We all have  
12           them. Every soul has them in some form  
13           or another. So I'm not going to speak  
14           to that. But I am going to speak  
15           because I ride the bus and my primary  
16           interest is in the 54.

17                   I have a ten minute ride  
18           every morning from Allegheny Center to  
19           Chestnut Street. And I understand that  
20           you're going to take that 54 and you're  
21           going to go down Chestnut Street and  
22           you're not going to turn on the East  
23           Street. To me that's a small thing. I  
24           don't know what it means to you. I  
25           don't know where that bus goes after

1 leaving Giant Eagle, but when it can  
2 turn on East Street. There are people  
3 who get on the bus on East Street.

4 I go to get off of  
5 Chestnut Street and I go to the Sarah  
6 Heinz because I'm a widow and I live by  
7 myself. And that's some of my  
8 communication all day long. I ride it  
9 back and forth. I'm sorry. I ride it  
10 back and forth five days a week. I  
11 ride other buses and I'm not speaking  
12 to those buses. I'll ride them, I'll  
13 find the stops, I'll find the routes,  
14 I'll do something.

15 The 54 I rely on every  
16 morning. I catch it about 9:04, it  
17 gets --- ten minutes later, it gets to  
18 Chestnut Street. Right now, the only  
19 bus that goes to Chestnut Street is the  
20 54. I don't know what you have routed  
21 going down East Ohio Street, but the  
22 other buses right now don't stop there.

23 So, I mean, that's all I  
24 have to say. I have neuropathy in my  
25 feet and I can't drive anymore. So to

1 walk from Cedar Avenue to Chestnut  
2 Street is about six blocks. You got to  
3 go across the street, up the street,  
4 across the street. Thank you. And you  
5 have to pass begging people. You have  
6 to pass homeless people, and it's not a  
7 pleasant thing. Thank you very much  
8 for your consideration.

9 ATTORNEY CETRA:

10 Thank you, Eunice.

11 MS. SHANNON:

12 Steve Small.

13 MR. SMALL:

14 Good morning. My name is  
15 Steve Small, spelled S-T-E-V-E. Last  
16 name Small, S-M-A-L-L. Pretty simple  
17 enough.

18 When I was much younger,  
19 of course I don't look that old, but  
20 when I was much younger, my mother  
21 didn't drive. My father was at work  
22 all day long, so my mother didn't  
23 drive. She rode the bus. And I was  
24 quite frequently and often on that bus  
25 with her. My sister as well. We lived



1 at that point in White Oak, McKeesport,  
2 which was --- we had a bus that served  
3 our little neighborhood, which was  
4 White Oak. It was called the 60E, or  
5 the 60 echo. That bus disappeared a  
6 long time ago. So there's no question  
7 that buses and bus routes can  
8 disappear. Let nobody be fooled. It  
9 can happen because it has happened.

10 My interest primarily at  
11 this point is the 56. It used to be  
12 the 56C or the 56 Charlie, which comes  
13 from McKeesport, comes from Penn State,  
14 and it comes all the way into Downtown  
15 Pittsburgh. And I'm on that bus quite  
16 frequently, probably several times a  
17 week.

18 I, like many others here,  
19 I'm not really able to drive at this  
20 point because of eye things, balance  
21 things, you know, and --- you know,  
22 other disabilities.

23 So, as has been  
24 previously mentioned, particularly with  
25 people with disabilities that have

1 disabilities, and there's a lot of  
2 people in Pittsburgh because more older  
3 people in Allegheny County than  
4 anywhere, even, I think, in Florida  
5 almost. So there's definitely a need.

6 And not to mention that  
7 the funding problem goes beyond PRT.  
8 It also would affect ACCESS, would  
9 affect OPT, would affect MATP,  
10 probably. And I'm a rider in ACCESS as  
11 well. Because I depend primarily on  
12 ACCESS, OPT, MATP, and PRT.

13 So it is very, very  
14 important that we find a way that we  
15 keep the buses running. And it also  
16 helps because then we keep people  
17 working. So it's win-win all around.  
18 It's an absolute necessity for many of  
19 us and is extremely important to keep  
20 it going. So we need to find a way.

21 And I appreciate the  
22 opportunity to speak today and I hope  
23 that it will make a difference. But  
24 people have to come and they have to  
25 stand up and they have to speak and

1       they have to say what's right. Because  
2       if nobody speaks up, then it'll just be  
3       okay and it'll all just go away.

4               Thank you so much. I do  
5       appreciate the opportunity and the  
6       time. Thank you. May God bless you.  
7       Please do all you can.

8               ATTORNEY CETRA:

9               Thank you, Steve.

10              MS. SHANNON:

11              Our next speaker is not  
12       until 10:15, so we're going to wait a  
13       little bit to make sure that they're  
14       here.

15              ATTORNEY CETRA:

16              Okay, we'll go ahead and  
17       take a ten minute break. We're going  
18       to go off the record. Thank you.

19              ---

20       (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS HELD.)

21              ---

22              MS. SHANNON:

23              This meeting is being  
24       recorded and transcribed by a court  
25       reporter. If you do not wish to be

1 recorded, please exit the room now.

2 Each speaker will have  
3 three minutes to provide public  
4 comment. When called, please approach  
5 the speaker table podium, clearly state  
6 your full name and spell it slowly for  
7 the record before beginning.

8 All right, going to begin  
9 with Alice Gabriel.

10 MS. GABRIEL:

11 Good morning. My name is  
12 Alice Gabriel. A-L-I-C-E  
13 G-A-B-R-I-E-L. I am here today on  
14 behalf of Etna Borough. I'm an Etna  
15 Borough council person and have heard  
16 firsthand from residents about their  
17 concerns regarding the proposed cuts  
18 PRT faces.

19 Last month at our counsel  
20 meeting, we unanimously adopted a  
21 resolution in support of additional  
22 funding for PRT and we sent you all a  
23 copy. The proposed cuts would mean a  
24 63 percent loss of bus service in Etna  
25 and a 39 percent loss of job access.

1                   In addition, residents  
2           would have to walk much further to the  
3           remaining bus stops. Etna is a densely  
4           populated community surrounded by state  
5           highways, Route 8 and 28 and line  
6           completely with railroad tracks. This  
7           makes it difficult to walk to necessary  
8           services outside of our small borough.

9                   Etna is a food desert  
10          with no access to groceries within our  
11          borders. The nearest store is over a  
12          mile away along busy Route 8, making  
13          the task of carrying groceries home  
14          very challenging.

15                  Over ten percent of our  
16          residents do not own a vehicle and they  
17          rely upon public transit for grocery  
18          shopping and other essential services  
19          such as access to medical facilities as  
20          we have none in our community.

21                  Etna Borough is facing  
22          the loss of the P2 Mount Royal Line and  
23          the P13 Mount Royal Flyer routes and  
24          drastically reducing service to the  
25          remaining one Freeport Road route.

1       These cuts negatively impact --- affect  
2       all of our communities in Allegheny  
3       County. The added congestion of more  
4       cars on the road and resulting  
5       pollution are a huge factor as well.

6               Etna Borough Council is  
7       in support of reliable, sustainable and  
8       long-term funding solutions for  
9       Pittsburgh Regional Transit. We are  
10      relying on you. Thank you.

11               ATTORNEY CENTRA:

12              Thank you, Councilperson.

13               MS. SHANNON:

14              Sarah Buranskas.

15               MS. BURANSKAS:

16              Hi, Sarah Buranskas.

17       Sarah with an H and B-U-R-A-N-S-K-A-S.  
18       Whoever pronounced it did a good job.  
19       And then 15201.

20               So I'm here first and  
21       foremost as a resident of Allegheny  
22       County in the State of Pennsylvania and  
23       a PRT rider, just to say that I want  
24       accessible, efficient and dependable  
25       public transit. I was really excited

1 about the bus line redesign and hope to  
2 see it materialize because I know that  
3 public transit connects us all to jobs  
4 and to resources and to each other.

5 But I'm also here as a representative  
6 of the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council,  
7 because transportation is a critical  
8 component of food access.

9           The USDA defines a food  
10 desert based on two primary factors.  
11 One is low income and another is low  
12 access. And one really critical piece  
13 of that is vehicle ownership. Just  
14 because of their recognition of the  
15 role that transportation plays in  
16 accessing food, I think that's really  
17 more true than anywhere in Western PA  
18 or all of PA, But I know where I live,  
19 even if a grocery store is walkable,  
20 it's --- you're committing to a pretty  
21 significant uphill climb if you want to  
22 walk to the grocery store.

23           So several years ago, the  
24 Pittsburgh Food Policy Counsel created  
25 the region's first food action plan.

1 We engaged almost 2,000 county  
2 residents to map out how the food  
3 system could better serve residents.  
4 That's everything from how food is  
5 grown to how it gets to your plate to  
6 who can buy it and how much, and then  
7 food waste.

8 But during the process,  
9 we held eight community engagement  
10 sessions. And when asked about ideas  
11 or solutions participants had for the  
12 food system, transportation was the  
13 number one most cited solution. So I  
14 just want to note that was not a  
15 multiple choice question. It was an  
16 open question about food access in the  
17 county. And transportation came up  
18 time and time again for how residents  
19 could better access healthy, nutritious  
20 food.

21 So because of this, the  
22 PFPC and other regional organizations  
23 formed a coalition to fight for reduced  
24 fares for anyone who qualified  
25 qualifies for the Supplemental



1 Nutrition Assistance Program, or snap,  
2 which led to the creation of the really  
3 innovative Allegheny Go program, where  
4 riders pay 50 percent fares if they  
5 qualify for SNAP.

6 And our hope is that this  
7 would eventually become free fares for  
8 anyone who qualifies for snap, which is  
9 an income-based program. And instead,  
10 we now know that this funding shortage  
11 would lead to reduced services and fare  
12 increases. So, you know, just hereto  
13 say that we know that PRT needs long  
14 term sustainable transit funding to  
15 cover expenses, account for rising  
16 costs and support current service  
17 levels. And without this funding, PRT  
18 will have to make service cuts and  
19 increase fares which will negatively  
20 impact healthy food access. Thank you.

21 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

22 Thank you, Sarah.

23 MS. SHANNON:

24 Maria Cohen.

25 MS. COHEN:

1                   Good morning.    Maria  
2   Cohen.    M-A-R-I-A C-O-H-E-N.    I'm  
3   speaking on behalf of the Squirrel Hill  
4   Urban Coalition.    Good morning PRT  
5   Board and staff.    Thank you for  
6   arranging time for public comments.

7                   The Squirrel Hill Urban  
8   Coalition feels strongly that the  
9   changes in service proposed by PRT  
10   would be extremely detrimental to  
11   individual riders as well as to the  
12   financial, civic and business district  
13   health of Squirrel Hill and its  
14   immediate surrounding areas.

15                  Squirrel Hill is well  
16   aware that the cuts in service and the  
17   proposed fare increases are engendered  
18   by a lack of funding from the  
19   Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.   Thus, we  
20   urge our elected officials to increase  
21   transit subsidies sufficiently so as to  
22   negate the need for the proposed  
23   cutbacks.

24                  SHUC would like to point  
25   out several ways in which the proposed

1 service cutbacks and fare increases  
2 would negatively affect Squirrel Hill  
3 and our neighboring communities.

4 Squirrel Hill has a large  
5 concentration of students, elderly  
6 residents and other commuters. They  
7 all depend on safe, reliable, frequent  
8 service to get to schools, to  
9 businesses, to places of employment, to  
10 doctor's visits and other necessities  
11 of daily life. A reduction in service,  
12 such as decreased frequency of buses,  
13 negatively impacts commuters, creates  
14 longer wait times, makes timing of  
15 transfers more difficult, and generally  
16 reduces the accessibility of the public  
17 transit system.

18 Squirrel Hill businesses  
19 rely on shoppers who come to the  
20 business district by public transit.  
21 Reduced frequency reduces ridership,  
22 which ultimately reduces business in  
23 Squirrel Hill and our surrounding  
24 communities. Further, the cutoff of  
25 service at 11:00 p.m. affects

1 individuals who work late at night,  
2 those who work shifts, cultural  
3 institutions whose shows end late, and  
4 many others. This particular service  
5 cut keeps people at home and it does  
6 not help ridership.

7 The airport flyer 28x the  
8 change would eliminate any stops in  
9 Squirrel Hill and Oakland, by beginning  
10 the route in Carnegie. Thousands of  
11 students and others use the 28x, which  
12 travels as far as Carnegie Mellon  
13 University, as a cheap and efficient  
14 way to get to the airport. The changes  
15 would require riders in Squirrel Hill  
16 in Oakland to go downtown, transfer to  
17 Carnegie, and have longer wait times  
18 due to decreased schedules.

19 In addition, the route  
20 would not pass --- be past 11:00.  
21 Taken together, SHUC believes that the  
22 cuts to the 28x would result in further  
23 decreases in ridership due to  
24 disruption created by the changes. The  
25 fare increase proposed for the majority

1 of the riders is nine percent. The  
2 basic ride would increase from \$2.75 to  
3 \$3. This is an onerous increase for  
4 all, especially those on fixed incomes.

5 As we all know, fare  
6 increases make increased ridership  
7 purely aspirational. Please help  
8 support all bus riders, not just in  
9 Squirrel Hill. Thank you.

10 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

11 Thank you, Maria.

12 MS. SHANNON:

13 Dave Haines.

14 MR. HAINES:

15 Good morning.

16 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

17 Morning, Dave.

18 MR. HAINES:

19 Thank you, everybody.

20 First, I wanted to say thank you to  
21 everybody at Port Authority. I think  
22 you do a lot for this community and  
23 appreciate you giving us this time to  
24 speak today. I am a resident of Mount  
25 Lebanon. I take the T every morning to

1       come downtown. I think it's a vital  
2       link between the communities outside of  
3       the downtown area and vital to keeping  
4       downtown alive.

5               I would be opposed to  
6       service cuts on the T, both blue and  
7       red and silver, but understand if that  
8       is necessary, that, you know, we have  
9       to deal with that.

10              I'm also past resident of  
11       McCandless Township. I used to take  
12       the 12-0 the express bus into town and  
13       back. I think that is an extremely  
14       vital route that I understand might be  
15       up for cut, and I would be against  
16       cutting that route.

17              Again, bringing the  
18       people into town is vital to actually  
19       keeping the town alive. So that's all  
20       I have to say. Thanks.

21              ATTORNEY CENTRA:

22              Thank you, Dave.

23              MS. SHANNON:

24              Leanne McLaughlin.

25              MS. MCLAUGHLIN:

1                   Good morning. My name is  
2           Leanne McLaughlin. L-E-A-N-N-E last  
3           name M-C-L-A-U-G-H-L-I-N.

4                   I'm the assistant borough  
5           manager of Avalon Borough. The ZIP  
6           code there is 15202. I'm here today to  
7           represent the residents of the north  
8           boroughs our communities, which include  
9           Avalon, Bellevue, Ben Avon and  
10          Emsworth, will be devastated if the  
11          proposed route eliminations, service  
12          reductions and fare increases go into  
13          effect next February.

14                  I personally will be  
15          devastated, as I ride the 19-L to work  
16          every day. In fact, I rode the 19-L  
17          here today. I love riding the bus.

18                  Over the years, I've met  
19          so many interesting people from all  
20          walks of life who rely on public  
21          transit to make their way to work, to  
22          school, to cultural events, to medical  
23          appointments. We all have different  
24          reasons for riding the bus.

25                  Maybe we don't drive or

1 we're saving money to buy a new car or  
2 we just don't want to deal with the  
3 hassles and expense of parking  
4 downtown. Maybe we like to use the  
5 commute home to unwind without the  
6 stress of rush hour traffic. Many of  
7 us choose to live where we do because  
8 of access to the bus routes.

9 We stay connected through  
10 access to transit and we've created our  
11 own community on the bus. We look out  
12 for each other. We share stories about  
13 our days. Please don't take this away  
14 from us.

15 The elimination of the  
16 19-L and the 14 along with service  
17 reductions to the 16 and the 13 will  
18 strand many community members that I  
19 work with and work for.

20 Right now, so many of us  
21 are already worried about the price of  
22 gas, how inflation and tariffs will  
23 affect the price of cars, and the  
24 impact of vehicle emissions on the  
25 environment. Our communities were not



1 designed to have families with three or  
2 four or five personal vehicles. If  
3 you've ever visited Avalon, you already  
4 know that parking is scarce. You also  
5 know that residents are already  
6 concerned about the high volume of  
7 traffic on Route 65. We need access to  
8 public transportation now more than  
9 ever.

10 As community leaders, we  
11 should be focusing on complete streets,  
12 the concept of making roadways safer  
13 for pedestrians, bicyclists, buses, and  
14 personal vehicles. Eliminating bus  
15 routes and making people more reliant  
16 on cars is a step backwards in this  
17 endeavor.

18 The residents and leaders  
19 in Avalon are also very concerned about  
20 potential closures of three local  
21 bridges. The California Avenue Avalon  
22 Loop bridge in Avalon, the Ben Avon  
23 Bridge, and the Emsworth Camp Horn Road  
24 Bridge. Despite our best efforts,  
25 we've been unable to obtain information

1       about what these bridge closures would  
2       look like.

3                       What I can tell you today  
4       is that this part of the plan is  
5       unacceptable. Closing these bridges  
6       would landlock at least 45 residences  
7       in Avalon, plus more in Ben Avon. They  
8       wouldn't be able to get out. They  
9       would have no access to 65. They would  
10      have no access to get to work, to get  
11      to --- to grocery stores, to connect  
12      with family and friends, and perhaps  
13      even more tragically, emergency vehicle  
14      services couldn't reach them. There  
15      would simply be no way if these bridges  
16      are closed.

17                      The frustrating thing is  
18      that we haven't found out that if they  
19      won't be closed completely, how the  
20      funding to maintain and repair the  
21      bridges would take place.

22                      So in closing, I would  
23      just like to ask PRT to work together  
24      with our state leaders to find a  
25      solution because we're proposed cuts

1 right now are just unacceptable. Thank  
2 you.

3 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

4 Thank you.

5 MS. SHANNON:

6 Darcy. I'm going to ask  
7 you to help. The next speaker is Brian  
8 Hatgelakas.

9 MR. HATGELAKAS:

10 That's me right here.  
11 Thank you, Darcy. Yeah, sure. Okay.  
12 The mic's right there.

13 Good morning, PRT board.  
14 My name is Brian Hatgelakas. That's  
15 B-R-I-A-N H-A-T-G-E-L-A-K-A-S. I live  
16 in the --- I live at 15216 is my ZIP  
17 code.

18 Now, I'm here because,  
19 number one, I don't want to see the 41  
20 route disappear. I know a lot of  
21 people that use it, and I know a lot of  
22 people that take it and rely on it to  
23 get to work. And I know one person  
24 that uses it to get to work, that  
25 cannot walk the extra time to get to

1 the T station who has mobility issues.  
2 So that will devastate their  
3 employment. And also having access cut  
4 and not having room for me on occasion  
5 is unacceptable too. Doing this as an  
6 ADA rider would be basically like  
7 throwing my car keys away and saying,  
8 no, you can't have this opportunity.  
9 No, you can't have these opportunities.

10 Please don't take any  
11 opportunities away from me or others  
12 without cars. Keep everything rolling  
13 and I have faith that we will. And  
14 please, no budget without public  
15 transit funding.

16 And also, I --- also  
17 losing service after 11:00 p.m. at  
18 night would devastate everything, too.  
19 It would make --- it would cut me off  
20 from a lot of friends. It would cut me  
21 off from hanging out at night or going  
22 to shows if I want, or baseball games,  
23 even work possibilities also.

24 Please keep all  
25 possibilities rolling for me and others

1       that rely on access and public transit.  
2       Thank you and God bless.

3                   ATTORNEY CENTRA:

4                   Thank you, Brian.

5                   MS. SHANNON:

6                   I want to remind folks  
7       that if you registered online, make  
8       sure that you check in with the  
9       registration desk up front to make sure  
10      that we're here and that I can call  
11      your name.

12                  Our next scheduled  
13      speaker is at 10:45, so wait a few  
14      minutes just to make sure that they're  
15      here.

16                  ATTORNEY CENTRA:

17                  Since our next speaker  
18      isn't until 10:45, we're going to go  
19      off the record again for ten minutes.  
20      Thank you.

21                               ---

22      (WHEREUPON, A PAUSE IN THE RECORD WAS  
23      HELD.)

24                               ---

25                  MS. SHANNON:

1                   To resume the hearing, a  
2 reminder that this session is being  
3 recorded and transcribed by a court  
4 reporter. If you do not wish to be  
5 recorded, please exit the room now.

6                   Each speaker will have  
7 three minutes to provide public comment  
8 when called. Please approach the  
9 speaker's table, clearly state your  
10 full name and spell it slowly for the  
11 record before beginning.

12                  Can we please have Edith  
13 Bigus?

14                  MS. BIGUS:

15                  Good morning. My name is  
16 Edith Bigus. E-D-I-T-H B-I-G-U-S. I  
17 live in Etna. I take the number two  
18 bus. I take the number two bus three,  
19 four times a week. I take it to go  
20 grocery shopping, to the doctor, to get  
21 my prescriptions, to visit my friends,  
22 to the library. If you take that bus  
23 away, I will have no transportation to  
24 go anywhere.

25                  I do have a NAMS account

1 and I take it like, once a month. But  
2 if I had to take it two or three times  
3 a week, it would be way above my  
4 budget. Please don't take the number  
5 two away.

6 I have friends on that  
7 bus. We go places. We go to lunch.  
8 We go to the library. If you take it  
9 away, none of us will have that  
10 transportation.

11 Also, I'm from Long  
12 Island, New York, originally. I've  
13 lived in Pittsburgh for nine years.  
14 There were no buses there. One of the  
15 reasons why I came here as I got older  
16 was because I thought Pittsburgh was a  
17 great city to retire in. And I'm  
18 starting to have my doubts.

19 Also, you --- you have  
20 the NFL coming next year for the draft.

21 Why would you take buses away when you  
22 have the NFL coming? Don't you want to  
23 be a green city? I have nothing else  
24 to say, so thank you for your time and  
25 all have a good day. Thank you.

1                   ATTORNEY CENTRA:

2                   Thank you, Edith.

3                   MS. SHANNON:

4                   Gail Dressler.

5                   MS. DRESSLER:

6                   Hi, my name is Gail  
7                   Dressler. G-A-I-L D-R-E-S-S-L-E-R. I  
8                   came today because I'm concerned over  
9                   the --- I've lived here all my life,  
10                  and over the years, I've done a lot of  
11                  traveling, and I've been very proud of  
12                  my city.

13                  In fact, I remember, oh,  
14                  how many times did they call us the  
15                  best city to live in? Okay? And as a  
16                  matter of fact, fairly recently, very  
17                  recently, Governor Shapiro made a  
18                  comment publicly that Pennsylvania is  
19                  one of the best places for seniors to  
20                  live. Okay? That seniors are a  
21                  priority in Pennsylvania and  
22                  specifically Allegheny County in  
23                  western Pennsylvania, emphasizing  
24                  dignity, independence and support and  
25                  the importance of investing in services



1       for seniors. I don't know if you all  
2       had heard this little speech he had,  
3       but in that speech, he did make these  
4       comments.

5                       And I don't think we ---  
6       I don't think we need to lose any of  
7       that. Our senior citizens and our  
8       handicapped citizens are very  
9       important, and I'm not excluding any  
10      other citizens, okay? A lot of people  
11      today have been talking about students  
12      who ride the buses. Okay? I remember  
13      when I was a teenager, one of our  
14      favorite things to do was Saturday,  
15      take the bus, come downtown, go to the  
16      KDKA window and talk to the  
17      broadcaster. Okay? If any of you are  
18      old enough to remember any of that,  
19      okay?

20                      But please reconsider  
21      what you're doing with the buses. And  
22      I know funding is an issue, but work  
23      hard on it. Thanks so much.

24                      ATTORNEY CENTRA:

25                      Thank you, Gail.

1                   MS. SHANNON:

2                   Earl Westerlund.

3                   MR. WESTERLUND:

4                   Hi. Good morning. My  
5 name is Earl Westerlund. E-A-R-L  
6 W-E-S-T-E-R-L-U-N-D. Thank you for the  
7 opportunity to speak this morning. As  
8 I said, my name is Earl Westerland.

9                   I'm currently a Squirrel  
10 Hill resident. I'm a native of  
11 Duquesne and began riding the 61-C over  
12 a half century ago to attend Pirate  
13 games at Forbes Field. Okay. So I've  
14 established my elderly cred.

15                  I'd like to speak about  
16 --- elaborate a little bit more about a  
17 topic that maybe doesn't get as much  
18 play and apologize if I haven't heard  
19 it. There's a significant number of  
20 people who would prefer to use public  
21 transportation, but feel they have no  
22 choice but to drive. The buses don't  
23 go where they need to go, or the buses  
24 run too infrequently, or they're afraid  
25 of missing a connecting bus, or the

1 trips would take much longer than  
2 driving. A lot of folks don't want to  
3 drive because they aren't as skilled as  
4 they used to be, and they know it, at  
5 least implicitly.

6 Can't see as well as they  
7 used to, especially at night, or their  
8 reaction time isn't what it used to be  
9 and this makes them indecisive or timid  
10 or worse. I know some of these people,  
11 I live with them. I'm becoming one of  
12 these people. I'm 70, I still enjoy  
13 driving and I'm told that I still drive  
14 well. But I am starting to recognize  
15 myself in the description I made.

16 When the time comes when  
17 I should give up my license, I hope I  
18 can and not continue to drive because I  
19 have to. A robust, reliable public  
20 transportation system will get us off  
21 the roads, which is benefit for all the  
22 people who won't take the buses will  
23 get out of their way and make for a  
24 safer, faster and more pleasant commute  
25 for everyone.

1                   Thank you for the work  
2                   you're doing to try to maintain the  
3                   service. Thank you for the opportunity  
4                   to speak today.

5                   ATTORNEY CENTRA:

6                   Thank you.

7                   MS. SHANNON:

8                   Amelie Colletti.

9                   MS. COLLETTI:

10                  Good morning. My name is  
11                  Amelie Colletti. A-M-E-L-I-E  
12                  C-O-L-L-E-T-T-I. I appreciate the  
13                  opportunity to speak to you all today.  
14                  I was born with a cone rod dystrophy  
15                  and have a vision of approximately 20  
16                  over 1,250 with vision only in one eye.

17                  I work for Visibility  
18                  Pittsburgh and I work five days a week  
19                  riding the Silver line to Washington  
20                  Junction, currently then transferring  
21                  to a blue line or red line and riding  
22                  into town and walking and then taking a  
23                  bus into uptown to Miltenberger every  
24                  day during the week as well as riding  
25                  paratransit to the less accessible

1 areas of the city to provide services  
2 to individuals that also, like myself,  
3 have low vision or are blind.

4 I rely on public  
5 transportation and the reason why I  
6 chose to move to Pittsburgh in 2004 and  
7 then move to Bethel park in 2012 was  
8 because I could continue being  
9 independent. And I want to hold on to  
10 that as long as possible.

11 I use a white cane or I  
12 use a service dog. I have a guide dog.  
13 And I want to be able to do the things  
14 that I love and continue to support my  
15 community. Without PRT and access  
16 transportation, I can't go to work, I  
17 can't see my friends, I can't  
18 participate in blind and outdoor  
19 leisure development activities and  
20 blind and low vision tennis in Highland  
21 Park. These are all things that keep  
22 me going, keep me motivated, and keep  
23 our community strong.

24 And without these  
25 services, we won't be able to do those

1 things. We can't drive. That's not an  
2 option for us. So I just want you to  
3 consider that as you make your  
4 decision. We really, really need this  
5 service in Pittsburgh. And if we get  
6 landlocked, we won't be able to do the  
7 things that we need to do to thrive as  
8 a city and to be as inclusive as  
9 possible. Thank you.

10 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

11 Thank you.

12 MS. SHANNON:

13 Teaira Collins.

14 MS. COLLINS:

15 Good morning. My name is  
16 Teaira Collins. T-E-A-I-R-A  
17 C-O-L-L-I-N-S, and I am a resident of  
18 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Been here 50  
19 years. My whole entire life I could  
20 talk about when the buses ran, go  
21 outside, catch a bus every ten minutes,  
22 get a \$3 weekend there for Friday,  
23 Saturday, Sunday. Talk about how the  
24 buses were affordable, how the buses  
25 ran good, and how the service was

1       amazing.    The service isn't amazing  
2       now.

3                   I just moved to the run  
4       and I get three buses, the 58, the 93  
5       and the 56.    The 58 runs every two  
6       hours.    The 93 runs every hour, the 56  
7       runs every hour.   Guess what?   I got to  
8       get up and leave two hours before I  
9       need to be anywhere because the service  
10      is not good for me.

11                   And coming home, if I'm  
12      out after ten o' clock, I don't get to  
13      get home, because guess what?   No bus  
14      after 10,000, 10:30.

15                   Everyone keeps talking  
16      about how this was the most livable  
17      city.    It was.    It's not no more.  
18      Everybody's making all these big  
19      changes for all these things that's  
20      coming to the world, all the drafts and  
21      everything.   Who are you guys really  
22      working for?   Who are you really  
23      looking to do this for?   Are you  
24      looking to take care of your people who  
25      live in Pennsylvania or Pittsburgh?   Or

1 are you looking for to impress the  
2 people who are coming? Because if  
3 that's who you're looking to impress,  
4 guess what ain't going to happen. They  
5 can't catch the bus to get around. And  
6 they're going to want to catch the bus  
7 as well.

8                   Ubers and Lyft cost too  
9 much money. I lost my hearing two  
10 years ago in a car accident. Three  
11 years ago in a car accident. So I  
12 don't drive anymore. I've had a  
13 license since I was 18. I have panic  
14 attacks when I get behind the wheel of  
15 a car because I was hit by a dump  
16 truck. I am deaf in my right ear. I  
17 have a 13 year old with down syndrome,  
18 and I want him to be independent in  
19 Pittsburgh. And if he can't be  
20 independent and catch the buses,  
21 reliable buses, we're not staying here.

22                   I've been here 50 years.

23           I've raised five kids here, 12  
24 grandkids. Do what y' all gotta do and  
25 fix the system and make it the way it



1 was. You're not making it better.

2 PRT. Every time you change the name,  
3 Port Authority, we used to call it  
4 Patricia. I still call it Patricia.

5 Every time y'all change  
6 the name, the service gets worse.  
7 Every time someone comes in, the  
8 service gets worse. Stop fixing it.  
9 Because every time y' all fix it, you  
10 all do worse. You're not doing better.  
11 Do better for your citizens, because  
12 guess what? We're the ones riding your  
13 bus. Your seniors, your people who  
14 have disabilities, your people who need  
15 to go to school. Make it affordable  
16 and fixable for the people who ride it  
17 the most.

18 And even with a license,  
19 I've always caught the bus. I've  
20 always caught the bus because no matter  
21 where I live, I've made sure I was on a  
22 bus line. But right now, you all are  
23 making that hard for me. And you're  
24 making it hard for all of us.

25 So do what you have to do

1 and do what's right. I'm done. Have a  
2 wonderful day. God bless.

3 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

4 Thank you.

5 MS. SHANNON:

6 Joan Ulicny.

7 MS. ULICNY:

8 Hi. My name is Joan,  
9 J-O-A-N. Last name Ulicny,  
10 U-L-I-C-N-Y. I am a native  
11 Pittsburgher, but a traumatic auto  
12 truck accident 38 years ago brought me  
13 back to Pittsburgh. I was in a coma at  
14 Allegheny General for almost a month,  
15 and I was dismissed into the care of  
16 Harmarville, which I think is now  
17 called Health South.

18 After coming out of my  
19 coma, I was left with a traumatic brain  
20 injury. Thirty-eight (38) years later,  
21 I have cognitive problems. I'm legally  
22 blind, weak on the left side from a  
23 massive stroke that was part of that  
24 accident. I have no use of my left  
25 hand.

1                   My dad, who was A Marine  
2           taught me and my sister that you have  
3           to play with the cards you're dealt.  
4           Well, nobody wanted these cards,  
5           especially me. But through blindness  
6           and visual services I learned about  
7           access. I had mentioned that to my dad  
8           that I could use access and try to  
9           become more independent, but he was  
10          against it. That's my job, he said.

11                   So he would take me back  
12          and forth to Harmarville as I remained  
13          an outpatient for physical therapy and  
14          cognitive retraining. And I relied on  
15          him many, many years. However, as he  
16          declined in health, I became a member  
17          of the access system in 2000 and relied  
18          on them heavily to do grocery shopping,  
19          to go to church, to go to doctor's  
20          appointments in Moon Township,  
21          Allegheny General, and to deal with the  
22          cards that I've been dealt, as my dad  
23          taught me.

24                   It would be a traumatic  
25          loss to me if I were to lose this

1 privilege. And I call it a privilege  
2 because I'm very aware that not all  
3 cities in America have an access system  
4 and for people who are dealt unexpected  
5 blows, such as myself, it has been  
6 nothing but gift.

7 I'd like to say one more  
8 thing about the drivers that I have. I  
9 can't explain or convey to you the  
10 confidence you get as you come to know  
11 your drivers, as you're getting in the  
12 car, as they're assisting you up and  
13 down the steps of a van. You come to  
14 trust them. You're putting your life  
15 in their hands. They're all making our  
16 lives possible. Please keep this  
17 access system as vibrant as it possibly  
18 can be. Thank you for letting me talk  
19 today.

20 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

21 Thank you, Joan.

22 MS. SHANNON:

23 Donald Russell.

24 MR. RUSSELL:

25 D-O-N-A-L-D

1 R-U-S-S-E-L-L. But I just got off of  
2 an overcrowded 91 bus and they --- they  
3 went to cut the time down off peak  
4 hours and that's going to be a  
5 hardship.

6 The minimum pay for  
7 fares, if this goes through, it's going  
8 to be \$6 a day and that's inbound and  
9 outbound. If --- now I take two buses  
10 I'm happy. I got to have far ferrous  
11 car. I would be screwed up. It's  
12 going to cost \$12 a day. The maximum  
13 pay on fare will be \$84. Depending on  
14 how often that you catch a bus it's  
15 going to cost \$84.

16 Fortunately I'm making a  
17 living wage, but those who are not are  
18 going to be shafted because they won't  
19 be able to afford a bus.

20 Second thing is having  
21 the buses end at 11 o' clock is  
22 ridiculous because a lot of people are  
23 getting out of work at that time and  
24 they need the bus to go home.

25 I figured out the 991,

1       that that bus runs to 12:35 a.m.

2       That's because people knew that at that  
3       time and if it ends at 11 o' clock,  
4       it's like I said, a lot of people who  
5       are working will not be able to go home  
6       and another shows up.

7               I'm going to be hopefully  
8       volunteering with the cultural  
9       district. I don't know what time  
10      ambassadors leave Benedum Center.

11             So it's like I said, this  
12      thing is going to be totally messed up  
13      if it goes through. A lot of people  
14      also won't be able to get into town for  
15      light up night for first night and the  
16      fireworks at the Point.

17             So that's all I got to  
18      say. Thank you.

19             ATTORNEY CENTRA:

20             Thank you, Don.

21             MS. SHANNON:

22             Megan Patton.

23             MS. PATTON:

24             Hello, I'm Megan Patton.

25      M-E-G-A-N P-A-T-T-O-N. Good morning,

1 everyone. I wanted to take a moment to  
2 highlight a critical issue that  
3 directly impacts our ability to provide  
4 the most effective and equitable  
5 transportation for Pittsburgh public  
6 school students.

7 The urgent need for  
8 increased state investment in  
9 Pittsburgh Regional Transit. PRT is  
10 projecting a significant budget  
11 deficiency beginning in the fiscal year  
12 of 2026, a gap that will grow larger  
13 each year unless we act to maintain  
14 current service levels and ensure  
15 long-term sustainability. PRT needs  
16 117 million infused of state funding  
17 beginning in fiscal year 2026 with  
18 compound and annual increasing moving  
19 forward.

20 This funding is not about  
21 expansion, it's about survival. It's  
22 about ensuring that families, students  
23 and workers in our city can continue to  
24 rely on dependable and affordable  
25 transit. Without this investment, PRT

1        may be forced to implement significant  
2        service reductions, fare increases and  
3        staff cuts, changing the world of  
4        disproportionately impacting our most  
5        vulnerable communities.

6                        For our school district,  
7        this could make it more difficult to  
8        coordinate safe, timely transportation  
9        for students who depend on public  
10       transit to get to and from school.    PRT  
11       has been an essential partner  
12       practically as the nationwide bus  
13       driver shortage has made more  
14       challenges to ensure consistent  
15       transportation.

16                       Reliable public transit  
17       remains a key factor to ensuring  
18       students succeed in access.    Thank you.  
19       Megan Patton, Director of Pittsburgh  
20       Public Schools Transportation  
21       Department.

22                       ATTORNEY CENTRA:

23                       Thank you, Megan.

24                       MS. SHANNON:

25                       Jeanine L. DeBor



1                   MS. DEBOR:

2                   Good morning, Jeanine,  
3                   J-E-A-N-I-N-E, DeBor, D-E-B-O-R. I am  
4                   the Executive Director of the  
5                   Pennsylvania Trolley Museum and we've  
6                   had a longstanding partnership with  
7                   PRT.

8                   So we're very honored to  
9                   be here today to speak on that  
10                  partnership and the importance of  
11                  transportation in our region. The  
12                  Trolley Museum we tell the story of the  
13                  Trolley era. Trolleys were the first  
14                  major public transportation system and  
15                  their impact on our communities is felt  
16                  to this day.

17                  People took trolleys  
18                  everywhere, to church, to theaters, to  
19                  Kennywood. Trolleys helped build  
20                  suburbia and connected communities and  
21                  people. In fact, our museum's tagline  
22                  is history that connects us.

23                  The major company that  
24                  operated trolleys in Pittsburgh was  
25                  Pittsburgh Railways Company, the

1 predecessor of the Port Authority,  
2 which is, of course, the predecessor to  
3 PRT.

4 It had the third largest  
5 fleet of PCCs in North America. And to  
6 this day, three of those original  
7 streetcar lines are still in use today  
8 by PRT. In fact, streetcars, contrary  
9 to popular belief, do run on the city  
10 streets of Pittsburgh. It's called the  
11 T.

12 Today, the grandchildren  
13 of trolleys, which is light rail and  
14 buses, continue to connect our  
15 communities. They take people to work,  
16 to school, medical appointments, places  
17 of worship, shopping, sporting events.  
18 The list goes on and on.

19 Public transportation has  
20 and always will be a vital part of our  
21 life in western Pennsylvania. It  
22 continues to connect communities and  
23 people. For people with limited  
24 mobility and funds, it is their only  
25 means of transportation.

1                   On a personal note, I  
2                   worked in downtown Pittsburgh for many,  
3                   many years, and like my dad and my  
4                   grandparents and so many other people  
5                   in my family, I took the bus to work  
6                   and I had a pass that was called a  
7                   connect card.

8                   So again, continuing to  
9                   connect communities and people, that's  
10                  what public transit is all about. So I  
11                  would ask that you continue to connect  
12                  people and communities and that the  
13                  legacy of the trolley era will continue  
14                  into the future. Thank you very much.

15                  ATTORNEY CENTRA:

16                  Thank you, Jeanine.

17                  MS. SHANNON:

18                  Seth Bush.

19                  MR. BUSH:

20                  Good morning. My name is  
21                  Seth Bush. S-E-T-H B-U-S-H. I am the  
22                  advocacy manager at Bike Pittsburgh and  
23                  I'm speaking today to express our  
24                  organization's strong support for  
25                  Pittsburgh Regional Transit and the

1       urgent need for increased sustainable  
2       transit funding in Pennsylvania.

3               Founded in 2002, we are a  
4       501(c)(3) bicycle and pedestrian  
5       advocacy organization working within  
6       the Pittsburgh urban core. Public  
7       transit directly benefits our roughly  
8       3,500 members, our staff, and the  
9       nearly 30 percent of Allegheny County  
10      residents who cannot or choose not to  
11      drive due to their age, ability or  
12      financial resources.

13              We envision a Pittsburgh  
14      where people can thrive without needing  
15      to own a car, making Pittsburgh a world  
16      class leader in clean, affordable and  
17      convenient transportation. While we  
18      primarily champion biking and walking,  
19      we know that public transit is vital to  
20      achieving that vision.

21              For many people in our  
22      region, biking, walking and public  
23      transit are not separate choices. They  
24      are essential, interconnected parts of  
25      a single journey. Our members bike to

1 the bus, stop for the morning commute  
2 and walk into the office. They take  
3 the T downtown and use a POGO bike  
4 share to get that last mile to a  
5 meeting.

6 They rely on the bus to  
7 get home safely after a late shift when  
8 it's too dark to bike or walk very far.

9 My job takes me all over  
10 the county and every day I see  
11 neighbors using the bus as a leg in  
12 their journey to work, school, or the  
13 grocery store. That also includes  
14 biking or walking. For them, the bus  
15 isn't just a convenience, it's a  
16 bridge, a shelter from a sudden storm,  
17 and an extension of their own mobility.

18 It enables seniors and  
19 individuals with disabilities to  
20 maintain independence, students to get  
21 to school, and workers to access better  
22 job opportunities. If public transit  
23 is cut, people who are able to get  
24 around without a car will lose that  
25 freedom.

1                   And when that happens,  
2     our entire region feels the impact to  
3     our economy, safety, traffic congestion  
4     and commute times. These cuts would  
5     not only cripple our transit system,  
6     they would also undermine the safety of  
7     our streets, the very core of our  
8     mission at Bike Pittsburgh. When  
9     transit service is cut, more people are  
10    forced to drive, more cars, mean more  
11    congestion, more pollution and a  
12    greater risk of traffic crashes for  
13    everyone, including the cyclists and  
14    pedestrians we fight to protect.

15                  I know the panel before  
16    me now understands this. You want to  
17    grow our service, not cut it. So I  
18    will use this opportunity to join the  
19    chorus of voices from across  
20    Pennsylvania calling on our state  
21    legislators for a sustainable long-term  
22    funding solution. We urge you to  
23    support legislative action that'll  
24    provide PRT with an additional \$117  
25    million a year in state funding

1 beginning in fiscal year 2026 to  
2 sustain operations and invest in the  
3 future of our transit system over the  
4 next decade.

5 Without action, our  
6 communities, economy and quality of  
7 life will suffer. Thank you for your  
8 time and attention to this urgent  
9 matter. We sincerely appreciate your  
10 leadership in ensuring a strong and  
11 reliable public transit system for  
12 Allegheny County. Thank you.

13 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

14 Thank you, Seth.

15 MS. SHANNON:

16 Elizabeth Piccione.

17 MS. PICCIONE:

18 Hi, it's P, as and Paul,  
19 I-C-C-I-O-N-E, first name is Elizabeth.

20 Imagine having a critical  
21 appointment for treatment at UPMC,  
22 Hillman Cancer Center, Heart and  
23 Vascular Institute or one of our  
24 hospitals. You don't have a vehicle.  
25 You don't have anyone who can take you.

1       You're on a limited budget.    You've  
2       relied on public transportation to take  
3       you to your crucial appointments.

4                 Imagine the panic when  
5       you find out the bus you've taken to  
6       your appointments that goes to that  
7       hospital has been cut.    You have no  
8       idea how you're going to get there or  
9       receive the care that you need or  
10      deserve.    Sadly, this isn't a  
11      hypothetical situation, but something  
12      many of our patients will be facing if  
13      some of the direct services to UPMC and  
14      other hospitals is cut.

15                Good afternoon and thank  
16      you for the opportunity to speak today.  
17      My name is Dr. Elizabeth Piccione.    I'm  
18      a cardiologist and the president of  
19      UPMC Passavant Hospital.    I'm not just  
20      here as a representative of UPMC and  
21      UPMC Passavant, but as a voice for our  
22      patients and our staff whose lives  
23      would be directly impacted by the  
24      decisions we make about public  
25      transportation without the needed



1 public investment and prioritization of  
2 these services.

3 The Pittsburgh Regional  
4 Transit has proposed massive cuts to  
5 its service, including slashing the bus  
6 route that stops in front of my  
7 hospital at UPMC Passavant, making it  
8 impossible for our staff and sick  
9 patients to be able to rely on the  
10 public transportation to get them to  
11 their needed appointments or scheduled  
12 for their shift of work.

13 A hospital is only as  
14 accessible as the transportation that  
15 leads to it, and it's hard to believe  
16 that in a major metropolitan area in  
17 the United States we may be facing a  
18 very real situation where a hospital is  
19 not accessible to people to get to work  
20 or receive the needed care.

21 At UPMC, we have seen  
22 firsthand how essential this bus line  
23 is and all of our bus lines. For many  
24 of our patients, especially those in  
25 underserved communities, the this route

1       isn't a convenience, it's a lifeline.

2                       One patient recently  
3       shared that they rely on the bus to get  
4       to dialysis three times a week and  
5       without it, they'd have to choose  
6       between paying for groceries and paying  
7       for a ride. That's not a choice that  
8       anyone should have to make.

9                       Another patient, a senior  
10      living alone, said the bus was the only  
11      way to reach their cancer treatments.  
12      They don't have a family nearby and if  
13      the bus stops running, they'll just  
14      quit coming. That's sad. It's not  
15      just patient our staff, our nurses, our  
16      environmental service worker, dietary  
17      staff, many who rely on this bus to get  
18      to work. Many team members have said  
19      they'll quit if the routes are cut  
20      because they can't afford an Uber every  
21      day and they have no other  
22      transportation.

23                      We recently launched a  
24      commuter questionnaire across UPMC and  
25      the feedback was clear. Without

1       reliable, affordable transportation,  
2       many patients will struggle to attend  
3       appointments. Staff will struggle to  
4       get to work. This isn't hypothetical.  
5       If these bus lines are cut, the  
6       consequences will be immediate and  
7       severe.

8                       Our applicant pool will  
9       shrink. Our hospitals are 24/7  
10      operations and they require around the  
11      clock staffing. The proposed changes  
12      would jeopardize access to care,  
13      threaten jobs and undermine the very  
14      mission of our hospitals. It isn't  
15      about convenience. This is about  
16      equity, about ensuring that people,  
17      regardless of income, can access  
18      healthcare, that our hospitals can  
19      continue to serve our patients and our  
20      community with the services that they  
21      need. Thank you.

22                   ATTORNEY CENTRA:

23                   Thank you, Dr. Piccione.

24                   MS. SHANNON:

25                   Em Duhamel.

1                   MS. DUHAMEL:

2                   Hello, everyone. My name  
3                   is Em Duhamel. First name spelled E-M,  
4                   last name spelled D-U-H-A-M-E-L. I am  
5                   the community engagement and outreach  
6                   coordinator for the Fine View and Perry  
7                   Hilltop Citizens Counsels.

8                   Yesterday, as part of my  
9                   work, I have the opportunity to go  
10                  around in partnership with the  
11                  Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy to gather  
12                  information and feedback on the  
13                  proposed redesign for Fowler Park in  
14                  Perry Hilltop.

15                 Yesterday, I went to the  
16                 upper rooms, which is a senior high  
17                 rise, to get their feedback, to make  
18                 sure that their voices were included in  
19                 the process of redeveloping these  
20                 parks. And one of the things that I  
21                 heard the most from all of the people  
22                 who took my survey that day was, wow,  
23                 I'm really excited about all of these  
24                 things changing in the park. I know  
25                 it's just a three-minute drive from

1       where I live.

2                       I can't get there. I  
3       cannot walk there. The stair --- the  
4       terrain is just too bumpy for me. It's  
5       too hilly. I don't have a car. Very  
6       quickly that conversation turned to,  
7       well, can you bust there? And one  
8       person said, maybe I can right now, but  
9       I have a feeling that very soon that  
10      might not be a possibility.

11                     As Pittsburgh continues  
12      to invest in our communities, invest in  
13      opportunities for those of us who are  
14      marginalized, those of us who might not  
15      have access to every single thing that  
16      every other Pittsburgher has, public  
17      transit is really going to be the  
18      linking factor in making sure that my  
19      community members can actually go and  
20      do the things that we are working to  
21      bring to their community without having  
22      robust bus lines.

23                     We're starting to look at  
24      a situation where a lot of this work  
25      that we are doing is going to be going

1 to waste in some ways because people  
2 won't be able to access it.

3 The north side in  
4 particular is looking at some very  
5 extreme bus cuts. And the north side  
6 already sometimes feels isolated from  
7 the rest of Pittsburgh because in a  
8 majority of cases, a lot of times you  
9 have to go through downtown first to  
10 get to the rest of the city.

11 So the community in Fine  
12 View and Perry Hilltop ask you to make  
13 sure that they have the opportunity to  
14 enjoy everything that not only their  
15 neighborhoods have to offer, but  
16 everything the rest of Pittsburgh has  
17 to offer. And the only way they can do  
18 that is if there is accessible and  
19 reliable public transportation. And  
20 these bus cuts are a definite threat to  
21 the ability of these communities to  
22 feel connected not only to each other,  
23 but to the rest of Pittsburgh as a  
24 whole.

25 Thank you so much for the

1 opportunity to hear not only my  
2 opinions, the opinions of my community,  
3 but the opinions of Pittsburghers  
4 across our city. Thank you.

5 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

6 Thank you.

7 MS. SHANNON:

8 John Stinner.

9 MR. STINNER:

10 Good morning. My name is  
11 John Stinner, J-O-H-N S-T-I-N-N-E-R. I  
12 am the borough manager of the Borough  
13 of Dormont.

14 Borough of Dormont, after  
15 10 years of planning, is finally about  
16 to embark on Transit Oriented  
17 Development with PRT. Throughout the  
18 spring we have heard that money is  
19 going to be there for the development.

20 However, we are now starting to hear  
21 from state legislators that money may  
22 be cut as a result of the funding cuts  
23 to the PRT.

24 This would be  
25 approximately a \$52 million investment

1 in our community which we are now  
2 looking at possibly walking out the  
3 door due to the funding cuts.

4 To tell you the  
5 seriousness of our borough council, I  
6 have brought the resolution  
7 establishing the cooperation agreement  
8 with PRT that was passed at our June  
9 meeting and I'm going to enter it in  
10 the public record here.

11 Resolution of the Borough  
12 of Dormont providing for a joint  
13 development agreement with Pittsburgh  
14 Regional Transit to support the  
15 development of a transit oriented  
16 development program for the Dormont  
17 Junction property and adjacent  
18 property. Whereas the Borough of  
19 Dormont, through its comprehensive plan  
20 and various committee reports has set  
21 transit oriented development  
22 objectives.

23 Whereas the Pittsburgh  
24 Regional Transit, Dormont Junction  
25 property and property adjacent thereto



1 would benefit from cooperative efforts  
2 with PRT with respect to transit  
3 oriented development of said  
4 properties.

5 Now, therefore, be it  
6 resolved, the Council of Borough of  
7 Dormont, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania  
8 and in meeting assembled and it is  
9 thereby resolved by the authority of  
10 the same that within the procedure is  
11 hereby adopted effective immediately.

12 PRT intends to conduct a  
13 joint development solicitation process  
14 consistent with PRT's board adopted  
15 procedures for competitive negotiations  
16 for joint development that will include  
17 PRT's Dormont Junction property and  
18 with Dormont Council approval, the  
19 adjacent property owned by Dormont.

20 Consistent with PRT's JD  
21 procedures, Dormont's borough manager  
22 or other Dormont staff appointees would  
23 be part of the PRT led evaluation  
24 committee to evaluate submission and  
25 response to the Dormont Junction joint

1 development, RFQ and RFP, and these  
2 duties would include, but not  
3 necessarily be limited to, becoming  
4 familiar with PRT solicitation  
5 evaluation procedures evaluating all  
6 proposals in accordance with criteria  
7 and methods contained in the  
8 solicitation documents ranking all  
9 proposals in order of merit based upon  
10 solicitation criteria fully  
11 participating in hearing and evaluating  
12 development presentations as deemed  
13 necessary by the committee during the  
14 solicitation evaluation process and  
15 recommending to PRT CEO the Prosper  
16 whose proposal receives the highest  
17 ranking from the committee to move  
18 forward with the development agreement  
19 negotiations.

20 We are opening the RFQs  
21 tomorrow to review them and now we're  
22 facing possible cuts and lose the  
23 project entirely. I urge you to please  
24 restore the funding PRT for communities  
25 like Dormont. Thank you.

1                   ATTORNEY CENTRA:

2                   Thank you.

3                   MS. SHANNON:

4                   Christine Yockel.

5                   MS. DYBA:

6                   Christine Dyba, D-Y-B-A.

7                   I am currently a lifelong Pittsburgher  
8                   and have been riding public  
9                   transportation since the streetcars. I  
10                  currently take the bus and T at least  
11                  three times a week, and as I ride I  
12                  have made observation.

13                  I've come to the  
14                  conclusion that riding public transit  
15                  is not the journey, it is the  
16                  destination. It is these destinations  
17                  that I address for their lack of  
18                  concern to this upcoming crisis.  
19                  Starting with UPMC A-H-N, VA Hospital.

20                  Do you know how many of  
21                  your employees rely on PRT? Do you  
22                  know how many of your patients depend  
23                  on the PRT? Do you care? To PNC Bank,  
24                  the law offices and all the businesses  
25                  in downtown Pittsburgh. Your

1 employees, your clients rely on the  
2 PRT.

3 To the hotels,  
4 restaurants, housekeeping, staff,  
5 security that rely on the PRT. To the  
6 Steelers, Pirates, Penguins, your  
7 employees, your ushers, your fans. Do  
8 you even ask? Note to the Steelers,  
9 the NFL draft next year. How are you  
10 going to volunteer? How are your  
11 volunteers going to get downtown? Are  
12 they going to drive and park to Pitt,  
13 CMU, Duquesne, Chatham, CCAC, Point  
14 Park, Pittsburgh Public Schools, your  
15 faculty, your students.

16 To Giant Eagle, Shop'n  
17 Save. Do you know how many of your  
18 workers rely on the PRT? How many  
19 customers have to take one, two or more  
20 buses because of the food deserts and  
21 now pharmacy deserts? To the City of  
22 Pittsburgh, Allegheny County and the  
23 other government offices in town. To  
24 the Carnegie Museums, John Heinz  
25 History Center, the Aviary, Phipps,

1 Heinz Hall, your employees, your  
2 volunteers, your patrons.

3 Now to the PRT. We  
4 understand you're a business with  
5 budgets, but you have to choose the  
6 doge approach with a chainsaw. It is  
7 dangerous and disrespectful to the  
8 riders. Yes, changes will be needed.  
9 Rides can be combined, tweaks to  
10 individual rides. But you have to get  
11 on the bus and talk to the passengers  
12 and talk to the drivers who know their  
13 routes.

14 When access to public  
15 transportation is denied to our  
16 destinations, it is lost and cannot be  
17 restored. It will be a downward spiral  
18 for the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny  
19 County and Southwestern PA. Even for  
20 those who never take public  
21 transportation and don't care, you will  
22 be affected by these destinations.  
23 Thank you.

24 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

25 Thank you, Christine.

1                   MS. SHANNON:

2                   Christine?

3                   MS. YOCKEL:

4                   Hi, I am Christine  
5                   Yockel, Y-O-C-K-E-L. Good morning. My  
6                   name is Christine Yockel.

7                   I am the business and  
8                   sponsor manager at Bike Pittsburgh, but  
9                   I'm here today as a human. I am a  
10                  resident of Allegheny County, a  
11                  neighbor, a wife and a daughter, a  
12                  sister, a mother and a PRT user.

13                  I am here today because  
14                  functional transportation is the bare  
15                  minimum to creating a city that's on  
16                  par with global trends and competitive  
17                  with economic opportunity.

18                  A good transportation  
19                  system is the difference between  
20                  creating a city full of hardship or one  
21                  that people can thrive in. I struggled  
22                  to write my testimony today because  
23                  there are so many variables and so much  
24                  at stake if we lose PRT and these  
25                  proposed cuts will certainly lead to us

1 all losing PRT in a matter of years.

2 I could explain how the  
3 bus system has been a lifeline towards  
4 independence from my neighbors who are  
5 refugees new to Pittsburgh and new to  
6 the United States. I could talk about  
7 my experiences living in Colorado and  
8 enjoying the freedom of movement  
9 allowed by their well connected  
10 networks, allowing me to afford to live  
11 in a city at a minimum wage job, paying  
12 off my very large student loans and  
13 still having money left over in the  
14 bank at the end of the month for  
15 emergencies.

16 I could talk about my  
17 brother and how following a car crash  
18 in 2019, he has been unable to drive  
19 for medical reasons and how it's  
20 limited both his job prospects and  
21 where he can live, but because of  
22 investment in Washington State  
23 transportation networks, he is making  
24 it work as a high school history  
25 teacher.

1 I live in Westview, just  
2 outside the city. My routes are the  
3 01, the 8, the 13. I often take the  
4 bus before the bus I need because of  
5 the frequency in the North Hills and  
6 other suburbs is not such that I can  
7 miss the bus that I need when I think  
8 about riding the bus.

9 My experiences riding the  
10 bus in Pittsburgh allow me to see the  
11 beauty in simple human interaction,  
12 especially in a post-COVID world where  
13 that's so important. Saying hello and  
14 thank you to your driver, noticing that  
15 they're not the person who usually is  
16 on the route. Making faces at the  
17 restless kids, asking mom when it's  
18 going to be their stop. Older adults  
19 comparing notes about the Pirates the  
20 night before.

21 Younger men scrambling to  
22 help lift the ADA seats for a stranger  
23 when the bus starts to kneel, telling a  
24 nervous young woman on her way to an  
25 interview that she does not have



1 lipstick on her teeth. Asking a  
2 stranger how they're enjoying the book  
3 you read last month. Simple stranger  
4 pleasantries. Human kindness for the  
5 sake of being kind. That's what you  
6 get to see and the experience of riding  
7 the bus, that's the community  
8 experience I want for my kids.

9 We're all trying to  
10 create a better, more connected  
11 Pittsburgh, a robust transportation  
12 system does that, period. Pittsburgh  
13 touts itself as one of the most livable  
14 cities in the country, and we cannot  
15 claim that if a third of our citizens  
16 cannot get around.

17 Please, please don't just  
18 patch the hole. Prevent the cuts, yes.  
19 At the bare minimum, we need to find a  
20 sustainable solution to providing the  
21 resources to invest in and grow and  
22 improve public transportation for the  
23 Pittsburgh Metro area. Thank you.

24 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

25 Thank you.

1                   MS. SHANNON:

2                   Sharon Sealey.

3                   MS. SEALEY:

4                   Sharon Sealey.

5                   MS. SHANNON:

6                   Sharon, you can sit at  
7 the table if you'd like. Your choice.

8                   MS. SEALEY:

9                   Thank you, though. Hi,  
10 my name is Sharon Sealey. S-H-A-R-O-N  
11 S-E-A-L-E-Y. And I'm a resident of  
12 Baldwin apartment complex in Baldwin.  
13 I'm here for a lot of people that live  
14 up there. I have a lot of friends that  
15 live in a high rise up there. I've  
16 been living up there for 25 years.

17                   I moved up there in 2000.  
18 I moved over there because I had got  
19 shot twice just being in the wrong  
20 place the wrong time, and I needed to  
21 be on one level floor, and I moved up  
22 there.

23                   My daughter, she still  
24 live up there. My three grandchildren  
25 live up there. A lot of my friends are

1 still up there. A lot of them can't  
2 even get down here to talk about the  
3 buses, you know what I'm saying? I  
4 mean, I have kidney failure. What?  
5 2012, the doctor removed my entire  
6 colon, and I didn't find that out for  
7 three years.

8 So I struggle with a lot  
9 of health conditions. I struggle with  
10 my legs. You know, I've been using a  
11 bus for 70 years, you know what I'm  
12 saying? I never learned how to drive.  
13 My daughter doesn't know how to drive.  
14 My grandson went to the bathroom and  
15 left me, so I'm just like, you know, I  
16 don't know what else to do.

17 I do use access only for  
18 my medical because it would cost me to  
19 go to, like, the grocery stores and  
20 different places. If you take the Y47  
21 curry, I won't be able to make it to  
22 the banks. I won't be able to pay my  
23 cell phone downtown. And even up there  
24 on Curry Hollow Road, the bus runs up  
25 there. If you take the bus, either

1 way, we're stuck up there on that  
2 mountain. There's two high rises up  
3 there. It's probably like maybe ---  
4 maybe more than 2,000 units up there or  
5 whatever.

6 But I mean, I won't be  
7 able --- I can't walk --- I can't walk  
8 down Route 51 to Gray street and catch  
9 that bus.

10 I was just struggling  
11 over here because I brought extra  
12 oxygen tanks because I never walked  
13 this far, right? And one of them is  
14 like going out on me. So I have to  
15 kind of conserve my oxygen, you know,  
16 But I'm just praying, just not just for  
17 me, but for other people in my  
18 condition or worse.

19 My girlfriend, she has  
20 both of her legs amputated. She's on a  
21 wheelchair, you know, electric  
22 wheelchair. How will we get where we  
23 need to go, you know. Access, my  
24 kidney doctor dismissed me because I  
25 was late twice to my appointment

1 because access got me there an hour  
2 after my appointment and I had to get  
3 another kidney doctor, you know what  
4 I'm saying? I'm like, I don't know  
5 what to do, but thank y'all.

6 I just hope maybe y'all  
7 can keep the buses part time, you know,  
8 like eight o' clock in the morning  
9 until such a time and 3:00 something  
10 till such a time. Y'all did it before.  
11 I hope y'all do it again. That's all.  
12 Part-time buses. Thank you.

13 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

14 Thank you, Sharon.

15 MS. SHANNON:

16 Andrea Boykowycz.

17 MS. BOYKOWYCZ:

18 Hi, my name is Andrea  
19 Boykowycz, and I'm a resident of  
20 Oakland. I live in central Oakland. I  
21 work at the Oakland Planning and  
22 Development Corporation.

23 We are advocates for  
24 affordable housing and for a vibrant  
25 and inclusive neighborhood. Neither of

1       those things is possible in the Oakland  
2       neighborhoods without robust transit  
3       that provides service for people from  
4       far reaches of Allegheny County to come  
5       to employment in Oakland. It's not  
6       something that we often make a  
7       connection for people, but the --- the  
8       existence of robust transit service is  
9       really very closely tied to  
10      affordability of housing within  
11      neighborhoods that are close to high  
12      desired employment centers.

13               People come from very far  
14      in order to be able to come into  
15      Oakland. Without bus service, they're  
16      absolutely going to revert to  
17      additional single occupancy vehicles.  
18      Housing single occupancy vehicles in  
19      Oakland is an incredibly expensive  
20      thing. And subtract each --- each ---  
21      each car represents basically a  
22      household that you could fit in the  
23      same space.

24               During COVID when we were  
25      suddenly all of us remote, I had an

1 intern who needed something to do. I  
2 asked her to look at satellite maps of  
3 central Oakland and identify for me how  
4 many off street space surface parking  
5 spaces there were in central Oakland,  
6 the closest possible area for access to  
7 the universities, to the hospitals and  
8 to all of the Civic institutions there.

9 194,000 square feet of  
10 Oakland at that time were devoted to no  
11 other purpose than to warehousing  
12 single occupancy vehicles off site.  
13 Those are all commuters who, you know,  
14 if there is an expansion of that  
15 population of commuters, each of those  
16 things, it decimates the tree canopy.  
17 As people cut down their backyard trees  
18 in order to be plant --- to park cars,  
19 it increases the price of housing and  
20 for redevelopment of multifamily  
21 housing in that area.

22 Suffice to say, it's  
23 incredibly important to us that the  
24 service that delivers people into  
25 Oakland to study, to work, to attend

1 the doctor's office, all of those  
2 things are threatened by these funding  
3 cuts. It is really important for  
4 Harrisburg to figure out a sustainable,  
5 robust funding mechanism for public  
6 transit because the region's economy  
7 depends on it and our communities are  
8 in desperate need.

9 Thank you very much.

10 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

11 Thank you, Andrea.

12 Andrea, could you spell your last name  
13 for the record, please?

14 MS. BOYKOWYCZ:

15 B-O-Y-K-O-W-Y-C-Z.

16 MS. SHANNON:

17 Christopher Watts.

18 MR. WATTS:

19 Hello. Ready to go? All  
20 right.

21 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

22 We're ready.

23 MR. WATTS:

24 Good morning, everybody.  
25 My name is Christopher Watts and I've



1 had the privilege and responsibility to  
2 serve as the President CEO of the Boys  
3 and Girls Clubs of Western Pennsylvania  
4 since November of 2022.

5 I just want to thank you  
6 for the opportunity to share this  
7 testimony of how the thousands of  
8 youth, family and staff of the Boys and  
9 Girls Clubs rely on public transit to  
10 deliver our mission, which is to do  
11 whatever it takes to enable all young  
12 people, especially those that need us  
13 the most, to reach their full potential  
14 as productive, caring and responsible  
15 citizens, which I think we all can  
16 agree, every kid in Allegheny County  
17 and beyond deserve.

18 I'm here today, you know,  
19 just to be direct, to represent the  
20 critical and urgent need to the Boys  
21 and Girls Club's mission and community,  
22 not just to sustain but grow public  
23 transit in Allegheny County.

24 For some context, for  
25 over 135 years, the boys and Girls

1 Clubs has worked to advance the  
2 potential of youth and teens throughout  
3 the Pittsburgh region. Now serving  
4 nearly 11,000 youth at 11 chartered  
5 sites, we're a safe place for kids to  
6 prepare for careers in life with  
7 programs including preschool, before  
8 and after school, summer camp, teen  
9 mentoring, workforce development, STEAM  
10 and sports, and more.

11 Our core values of  
12 safety, fund and inclusion help us  
13 accelerate progress towards our  
14 priority outcomes of academic success,  
15 character leadership and healthy  
16 lifestyles. And these outcomes advance  
17 our members career and life readiness  
18 so all club kids are prepared to  
19 graduate with a plan for the future,  
20 prepare for the future.

21 The data proves that our  
22 works with 90 percent of our club teens  
23 expected to graduate from high school,  
24 and 80 percent have submitted an  
25 application to post secondary

1 education, which both exceed national  
2 averages.

3 Although our mission is  
4 to activate and advance the potential  
5 of every child. We recognize that what  
6 we do makes the most difference to  
7 those who need us the most. For our  
8 last annual report, 70 percent of the  
9 youth we serve identify as non-white,  
10 65 percent reside in single parent  
11 households and 70 percent receive free  
12 and reduced lunch.

13 With that, we're  
14 incredibly committed to supporting  
15 youth, families and communities that  
16 face significant challenges. And a  
17 considerable portion of the  
18 municipalities within Allegheny County  
19 where we operate have poverty rates  
20 exceed the national average. You know,  
21 including the City of Pittsburgh where  
22 we have three clubhouses, Borough,  
23 Millvale, Carnegie, Duquesne City,  
24 McKees Rocks and McKeesport.

25 Public transit is a

1 lifeline to our programs in those  
2 communities and to opportunity. And we  
3 all know that.

4 Despite the best efforts  
5 of us and many peer organizations  
6 committed to supporting youth, demand  
7 for safe places for youth outside of  
8 school and during the summer months  
9 continues to outpace the availability  
10 of programs.

11 And quick summary, I'm  
12 sure you know some of the stats, but  
13 the biggest barriers to participate in  
14 our programming are availability and  
15 access and majority of kids and teens  
16 that come to our program come via  
17 public transit. We rely heavily  
18 through the Pittsburgh Public School  
19 system public transit every single day.

20 Every one of our teens we  
21 are supporting and purchasing through  
22 grants PRT cards, the Connect cards to  
23 help them access to our programs and  
24 without the additional funding  
25 necessary to sustain current service,

1       their post service cut and fare  
2       increase would significantly impact our  
3       organization. Most importantly, the  
4       young people and teens who we all know  
5       are the future of our region that need  
6       access to programs like the Boys and  
7       Girls Clubs.

8                       We need every child to  
9       grow up and thrive within the county  
10      and these proposed cuts will have  
11      devastating consequences leading to  
12      negative outcomes of basically every  
13      metric that we can track related to  
14      career and life readiness and success.

15                     And so thank you for your  
16      time and consideration. We urge you  
17      and those in Harrisburg to provide a  
18      funding solution that sustains service  
19      to the Boys and Girls Clubs programs  
20      and those in need. Thank you.

21                     ATTORNEY CENTRA:

22                     Thank you.

23                     MS. SHANNON:

24                     As a reminder, when  
25      called, please approach the speaker

1       table or podium clearly state your full  
2       name and spell it slowly for the record  
3       before beginning.

4               Our next speaker is Kate  
5       Shanahan-Smith.

6               MS. SHANAHAN-SMITH:

7               Hello, my name is Kate  
8       Shanahan-Smith.    K-A-T-E  
9       S-H-A-N-A-H-A-N S-M-I-T-H.   And I'm  
10      here representing Elizabeth Seton  
11      Center.

12              Good afternoon, my name  
13      is Kate and I'm here today on behalf of  
14      Elizabeth Seton Center to stress the  
15      historical and ongoing importance of  
16      quality public transit, specifically  
17      the Brookline 39 bus route and access  
18      transportation.

19              Since 1898 our lot on  
20      Pioneer Avenue has been a place of  
21      education and service. In 1941, the  
22      Sisters of Charity purchased the  
23      property where they operated an all  
24      girls high school for over 30 years.

25              During that time, young

1 women took streetcars and the 39 bus  
2 route to the stop right in front of our  
3 building. Today, some of those same  
4 women still ride that same route, this  
5 time to access our senior services,  
6 which take place in their former  
7 School.

8 In 1985, our nonprofit  
9 was founded in response to the evolving  
10 needs of the community, and we've  
11 continued to grow ever since. It's not  
12 just senior citizens arriving at that  
13 bus stop. It's single moms dropping  
14 off their babies on the way to work,  
15 knowing they will be safe and loved.  
16 It's many of our staff members,  
17 including those with special needs, who  
18 are able to independently arrive at a  
19 workplace where they know they belong.

20 Our center offers so much  
21 to the community. Early childhood  
22 education, before and after school  
23 care, a senior center, adult day  
24 services, music lessons, meeting space  
25 for recovery groups, community theater,

1 and so much more. Every day, hundreds  
2 of people walk through the doors, many  
3 of whom could not get there without the  
4 39 bus. As a center, we rely heavily  
5 on access transportation. Access buses  
6 and cars pull into our lot on a  
7 seemingly constant cycle.

8 For seniors with mobility  
9 challenges, we're more than a  
10 destination. We're a place to connect  
11 with friends, learn, enjoy arts, live  
12 entertainment, and live life to the  
13 fullest. Access provides peace of mind  
14 for caregivers by allowing their loved  
15 ones with dementia and Alzheimer's and  
16 other conditions to reach our center  
17 safely for our adult day services,  
18 where they're welcomed with dignity and  
19 compassion.

20 Our organization exists  
21 to support the most vulnerable. We've  
22 weathered many challenges over the past  
23 40 years, including the devastating  
24 social isolation that seniors  
25 experienced during the pandemic.



1                   Cutting transit access  
2     will isolate our seniors once again,  
3     this time not because of a virus, but  
4     because of a funding decision.  
5     Reliable public transportation is not a  
6     luxury, it's a necessity. Without  
7     affordable, accessible transportation,  
8     vital resources like ours become out of  
9     reach. And if dedicated staff can't  
10    get to work, then the services we  
11    provide and the lives that they impact  
12    are at risk.

13                   On behalf of Seton Center  
14    and the people we proudly serve, I urge  
15    the state of Pennsylvania to come to a  
16    funding solution that doesn't just keep  
17    buses moving, but keeps our community  
18    moving. Thank you for your time.

19                   ATTORNEY CENTRA:

20                   Thank you, Kate.

21                   MS. SHANNON:

22                   Linda Warman.

23                   MS. WARMAN:

24                   My name is Linda Warman,  
25    W-A-R-M-A-N. And I am in Duquesne,

1 just up the hill from Kennywood. If  
2 you can hear all the screams on a nice,  
3 quiet, breezeless day, it's pretty well  
4 nice.

5 I'm here again to ask you  
6 guys, all the. All the board members  
7 and various other employees to please  
8 help us fight for our buses. We need  
9 them.

10 The 53-L, which is  
11 represented here by the --- my bloody  
12 bus is here --- is one of the buses  
13 that is going to be cut off. It cuts  
14 off a lot of people up there on top of  
15 the hill in Homestead. Plus it cuts  
16 out a couple of programs up there that  
17 will --- is already trying to gather up  
18 some momentum in getting back on their  
19 feet.

20 Basically, I'm saying,  
21 everybody, no matter who you are, go  
22 ahead, fight for this bus, whether it  
23 be cut off, major reduction or minor.  
24 And this couple, I've noticed on the  
25 list, no change.

1                   But you got to think  
2     about this way. If the bus cuts do go  
3     through, it's going to be more damaging  
4     than just having no bus. For the ---  
5     for the communities that will still  
6     have buses, they'll be so crowded like  
7     sardines. Because if that bus --- and  
8     I've been on a bus recently just got  
9     into an accident, the more people that  
10    are cramped on to the buses, that will  
11    be --- if the buses are crowded to the  
12    point where there are like packed like  
13    sardines and there's an accident,  
14    there's going to be a whole lot of  
15    trouble and I don't want to see that.

16                  So please, everybody rate  
17    your senators, your representatives,  
18    state, federal, whoever, local, just  
19    get them to say yes to dedicated  
20    funding. That's what we need. Thank  
21    you very much.

22                  MS. SHANNON:

23                  We will now take a brief  
24    break. This hearing will go off the  
25    record during this time. Thank you for

1 your patience.

2 ---

3 (WHEREUPON, A PAUSE IN THE RECORD WAS  
4 HELD.)

5 ---

6 MS. SHANNON:

7 To resume the hearing, a  
8 reminder that this session is being  
9 recorded and transcribed by a court  
10 reporter. If you do not wish to be  
11 recorded, please exit the room now.

12 Each speaker will have  
13 three minutes to provide public  
14 comment. When called, please approach  
15 speaker table or podium. Clearly state  
16 your full name and --- and spell it  
17 slowly for the record before beginning.

18 Going to begin with  
19 Melanie Holcomb.

20 MS. HOLCOMB:

21 My name is Melanie  
22 Holcomb. M-E-L-A-N-I-E H-O-L-C-O-M-B.  
23 And I am the Mayor of Ben Avon,  
24 Pennsylvania.

25 Are we good to go?

1                   MS. SHANNON:

2                   Yep.

3                   MS. HOLCOMB:

4                   Okay. I represent the  
5                   1,800 souls in Ben Avon. I wanted to  
6                   share some of the stories of Ben Avon  
7                   residents who reached out with their  
8                   concerns since all the publicity about  
9                   PRT cuts.

10                  These folks that I  
11                  represent are from all stripes of the  
12                  political spectrum, not just Democrats  
13                  or Republicans are the ones who go to  
14                  work or go to doctor or get their kids  
15                  where they need to be. It's everybody.  
16                  So that's who I'm here to talk to  
17                  about.

18                  Sophie is a young woman  
19                  who I've known since she was seven and  
20                  she has a lifelong vision impairment.  
21                  So it means that she will never drive.  
22                  She has graduated from college and has  
23                  a job in the profession of her choice  
24                  and relies on PRT service provider to  
25                  get her to work to support herself as a

1 young adult.

2 With these cuts to Ben  
3 Avon she would lose out. So I don't  
4 know what that solution is for her.

5 Carol is a senior citizen  
6 who lives in the house that she was  
7 born in, in Ben Avon, which she's not  
8 the only person in Ben Avon to still  
9 live in the house they were born in.  
10 She has no car. She regularly attends  
11 the doctor's appointments and does her  
12 weekly grocery shopping via the PRT bus  
13 system.

14 There are many more like  
15 her and many more coming up as folks  
16 retire and age in place. That's not  
17 going to change. Many like her who use  
18 the bus service to get to their medical  
19 appointments and needs to lifesaving  
20 transfusions, chronic conditions, all  
21 that kinds of things.

22 There is shocking number  
23 of young people who were raised in Ben  
24 Avon, went out into the world and have  
25 come back. They are buying homes or

1 moving in with friends or family and  
2 raising their families there and they  
3 are commuting to work in larger numbers  
4 than folks my age. That's what they  
5 grew up being able to do from Ben Avon  
6 and this would limit that ability.

7 Several families in Ben  
8 Avon are trying to be both fiscally  
9 responsible for their families and  
10 climate conscious. I've made the  
11 decision to be a one car family, myself  
12 included.

13 I went kicking and  
14 screaming, but I did. They are working  
15 couples so one of them needs to be able  
16 to take a bus to work almost every day.  
17 They can't continue to do that good  
18 work and be climate conscious and keep  
19 their families fiscally sound if they  
20 can't have that bus service to work.

21 Many residents of Ben  
22 Avon, also a surprising number, work in  
23 the hospitals and universities in the  
24 Oakland area, myself and my husband  
25 included.

1 I have pushed CMU where I  
2 work for cheaper parking options  
3 because it is a lot of money to drive  
4 to work and park there. But their  
5 consistent answer is that they are  
6 trying to encourage employees to use  
7 public transportation and we can't do  
8 that if there isn't public  
9 transportation.

10 Having been in the  
11 municipal world long enough, I know not  
12 one person's responsibility or one  
13 group's responsibility. Everybody  
14 needs to get the collective nonsense  
15 together and figure out how to find  
16 that funding and cut costs if needed.  
17 But the service to the community is  
18 what's vital and why the PRT is here  
19 and why they were starting and who they  
20 support.

21 Please do all you can to  
22 every organization to help our  
23 residents. Thank you so much.

24 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

25 Thank you.



1                   MS. SHANNON:

2                   Khara Timsina.

3                   MR. TIMSINA:

4                   Good afternoon. Can I  
5 go? Well, thank you. I'm happy I'm  
6 able to come and speak on behalf of my  
7 community.

8                   My name is Khara Timsina,  
9 spelled K-H-A-R-A. That's my first  
10 name. Timsina, T-I-M-S-I-N-A.

11                  I'm the executive  
12 director with the Bhutanese Community  
13 Association of Pittsburgh. BCAP in  
14 abbreviation for the organization. Our  
15 organization serves population  
16 primarily Nepali speaking former  
17 refugees. And we have still many more  
18 in the refugee status who are yet to  
19 become citizens.

20                  But when I'm speaking,  
21 I'm proudly representing a whole lot of  
22 immigrants and refugee populations. We  
23 serve the population that is mostly  
24 living in the South Hills  
25 neighborhoods.

1                   So as a former refugee,  
2                   when I came to Pittsburgh in 2009, I  
3                   was heavily dependent on public  
4                   transport. As you might know, we need  
5                   to have established credit history to  
6                   get a loan to purchase car, which means  
7                   many of us cannot right out way afford  
8                   to buy a car. So buying is one thing  
9                   with the credit card.

10                  And of course we are  
11                  supposed to be starting working as soon  
12                  as we reach the threshold of two months  
13                  to the maximum of three months when we  
14                  have the public assistance.

15                  Fast forward to 15, 16  
16                  years when we first came to 2008, we  
17                  still have a size population, mostly  
18                  women who have not yet obtained a  
19                  driver's license. But then those who  
20                  have, they have to provide  
21                  transportation to their friends and  
22                  families.

23                  But then we have a lot of  
24                  people still dependent on public  
25                  transportation. Many people work in

1 the second shift. Now cutting any  
2 public transportation services is going  
3 to heavily affect those families. And  
4 when that happens, you know there is no  
5 way but to apply for public benefit  
6 when there is no income.

7 Just because there is no  
8 transportation, people cannot have  
9 their income. And that is something we  
10 highly discourage people to do to apply  
11 for public benefits when they are  
12 capable of working. We encourage them  
13 to work. That is what we believe, what  
14 we did in the beginning.

15 So if there is any way  
16 the services are retained, all the  
17 services, public transportation are  
18 retained that would greatly benefit  
19 newcomers. Thank you.

20 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

21 Thank you.

22 MS. SHANNON:

23 Amy Zaiss.

24 MS. ZAISS:

25 All right, thank you so

1 much. My name is Amy Zaiss. I'll  
2 spell it for you. A-M-Y. Last name Z,  
3 as in zebra, A-I-S-S. I live in the  
4 Beechview community. ZIP code 15216.

5 I just wanted to come  
6 here. I've already filled out the  
7 online forms and called my  
8 representatives.

9 First of all, I'd like to  
10 thank the leadership in PRT for your  
11 stewardship during this crisis. I'd  
12 like to make it clear that personally I  
13 am disappointed by those in state  
14 leadership, especially those who seem  
15 surprised at this moment. Everybody  
16 knew that this was coming. If you've  
17 been paying attention, you knew this  
18 was coming.

19 And everybody has already  
20 said this. But transit is so important  
21 to me personally and to our region. I  
22 moved to Pittsburgh four years ago. I  
23 started renting in Beechview mainly  
24 because of the access to the T line. I  
25 have lived car free by choice my whole

1 adult life. Having access to transit  
2 in Pittsburgh is what made it feasible  
3 for me to move here in the first place.  
4 I wasn't really willing to give up my  
5 current lifestyle.

6 Fast forward a few years  
7 and I purchased my first home. That's  
8 another reason why I moved to  
9 Pittsburgh. I saw opportunity here,  
10 jobs, an easy way to live the lifestyle  
11 that I wanted to live. And Pittsburgh  
12 as a city and a region is at a  
13 precipice now. Our population has been  
14 stagnant if not declining. And so we  
15 have a specifically aging population  
16 that would be incredibly, incredibly  
17 hurt more than myself.

18 I'm able-bodied, I like  
19 to bike, I can walk. But the gutting  
20 of access services would just cripple  
21 the ability of the seniors in our area  
22 to move around.

23 And also we need to  
24 attract young people. Pittsburgh is  
25 still an affordable city nationwide.

1 We want it to be a desirable area. If  
2 we want to meet our climate and growth  
3 goals. We need transit. It's  
4 non-negotiable. I know you all know  
5 that. But I hope that our leaders in  
6 this state level here, everybody here,  
7 including myself, do the right thing.  
8 Not only fund transit, but grow  
9 transit. So thank you so much for your  
10 time.

11 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

12 Thank you.

13 MS. SHANNON:

14 James. James? We'll  
15 come back to James.

16 Janet Evans.

17 MS. EVANS:

18 Today I want to thank all  
19 of you for having these hearings. I  
20 was just checking about the 57 in our  
21 area, and I found out they're not going  
22 to eliminate it. But my concern now is  
23 that they came off of Johnson Avenue 11  
24 o' clock shift. My suggestion is they  
25 should eliminate around 11:30 or 12,

1 not 11 as probably most people or  
2 workers probably getting there.

3 And if you decide to do  
4 something with the 57. They don't  
5 eliminate it because there's caregivers  
6 going up to the high rise on Johnson  
7 Avenue, Riverdale. So again, thank  
8 you.

9 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

10 Thank you. I'm just  
11 confirming for the record that was  
12 Janet Evans speaking.

13 MS. EVANS:

14 Oh, yeah, one more thing.  
15 The raise in access that's going to go  
16 through, I have a plan for that. I  
17 just add more money each month. So I  
18 don't mind about that. As long as I am  
19 --- I have a question for all of you at  
20 Port Authority. Are they going to  
21 eliminate the senior passes?

22 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

23 Janet, we. We cannot  
24 answer questions while we take public  
25 comment. But you can --- we have staff

1 outside that can assist you. Actually,  
2 Darcy's raising her hand back there, so  
3 she'll talk to you about that once  
4 you're done testifying.

5 MS. EVANS:

6 Thank you for your time.

7 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

8 Thank you, Janet.

9 MS. SHANNON:

10 Yes, I believe that was  
11 Janet Evans.

12 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

13 Thank you.

14 MS. SHANNON:

15 Next we have James  
16 Fogarty.

17 MR. FOGARTY:

18 Hi, good afternoon. My  
19 name is James Fogarty. I'm the  
20 executive director of A+ Schools here  
21 in Pittsburgh. We're deeply concerned  
22 by PRT's proposed cuts. You know, 35  
23 percent of overall service, elimination  
24 of 41 bus routes, vital after 11:00  
25 p.m. service, fare increases, all set



1 to begin in February without state  
2 investment.

3 These changes pose severe  
4 risks, not only to riders, but to our  
5 students and the economic health of our  
6 region.

7 For A+ Schools, transit  
8 isn't a separate agenda. It's core to  
9 our mission to eliminate any chronic  
10 absenteeism in our schools that's  
11 missing ten percent or more of the  
12 school year.

13 Last school year, nearly  
14 a third of Pittsburgh public school  
15 students were chronically absent,  
16 missing ten percent or more school days  
17 in a single year. That equates to  
18 about 6,000 students who missed  
19 critical learning time.

20 We know from our  
21 attendance efforts like text message  
22 mail and call nudges that removing  
23 simple barriers such as reliable  
24 transportation for families can mean  
25 the difference between showing up and

1 not.

2 At Arlington Pre K to 8,  
3 we saw what happened when we removed  
4 yellow bus service for students. With  
5 more than half of the students living  
6 within a mile and a half walker zone  
7 radius that contributed to chronic  
8 absence rates that went up to about 76  
9 percent at that school.

10 We've been able to reduce  
11 that to about 54 percent now with good  
12 work between us and the staff. But we  
13 know that families who rely on PRT drop  
14 their kids off early there and at other  
15 schools in PPS because there's not  
16 before care for kids. And so kids are  
17 sitting outside that building in  
18 buildings across the city.

19 If PRT service is cut, it  
20 means kids will be unsupervised in lots  
21 of places across the city. Chronic  
22 absence is a powerful predictor of  
23 diminished academic success. Students  
24 who regularly miss school are less  
25 likely to read on grade level by third

1 grade, graduate high school, or pursue  
2 post-secondary education or job  
3 training. They also face long-term  
4 social and economic challenges and this  
5 has consequences beyond our individual  
6 students.

7                   Employers small and large  
8 rely on a transit supported workforce.  
9 For A+ Schools every missed school day  
10 erodes student potential and weakens  
11 our workforce, pipelines and community  
12 vibrancy. These cuts risk reversing  
13 the very progress we're fighting to  
14 achieve. Is that ---.

15                   ATTORNEY CENTRA:

16                   You have one minute.

17                   MR. FOGARTY:

18                   One minute. Thank you.  
19 Okay. We urge the board to reconsider  
20 the scope and timing of these cuts. I  
21 know it's not a lot that you can do  
22 about it, but we're urging you to do  
23 that. We ask you to maintain all  
24 routes vital for students and families,  
25 especially those serving schools and

1 neighborhoods with high chronic  
2 absenteeism, and to advocate  
3 forcefully.

4 And we will join you in  
5 this for state funding to fill PRT's  
6 \$100 million structural shortfall  
7 starting July 2025, taking pressure or  
8 off service level cuts that threaten  
9 the region's future. Our students  
10 attendance and their futures depend on  
11 transit that's affordable, reliable and  
12 accessible. Please prioritize what  
13 matters most. Keeping kids in schools,  
14 building a strong tomorrow, and driving  
15 our shared prosperity. Thank you so  
16 much.

17 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

18 Thank you, James.

19 MS. SHANNON:

20 As a reminder, this  
21 session is being recorded and  
22 transcribed by a court reporter. If  
23 you do not wish to be recorded, please  
24 exit the room.

25 Each speaker will have

1 three minutes to provide public  
2 comment. When called please approach  
3 the table or podium clearly state your  
4 full name and spell it slowly for the  
5 record before beginning.

6 We have Mary Matejevich.

7 MS. MATEJEVICH:

8 Hi, my name is Mary  
9 Matievich. I'll spell it.  
10 M-A-T-E-J-E-V-I-C-H. I live in urban  
11 Westmoreland County and since I don't  
12 have a car and never have, I took the  
13 Westmoreland Transit bus here.

14 I have had an illness  
15 that has disabled me on and off  
16 throughout my life and have had a very  
17 spotty work life. Could never afford a  
18 car, but I use the buses to get to  
19 work, to get to my friends, to get to  
20 the store throughout my younger life  
21 when I lived in Pittsburgh.

22 And I now come in to  
23 Pittsburgh regularly to see several of  
24 my very important doctors. And I also  
25 come in to use the Carnegie Library to

1 go to some cultural events. The PRT  
2 buses are very important to me.

3 The good bus service that  
4 we've had in Pittsburgh in mind 65  
5 years is, and I'll quote, the lifeblood  
6 of the city. And that's --- I'm  
7 quoting my friend Martha Ryle, who I  
8 went to high school with, who is a  
9 local Pulitzer Prize winning  
10 journalist. If you haven't read her  
11 article, it's some years back, she was  
12 amazing.

13 Many Pittsburghers and  
14 people like me don't have a car, can't  
15 afford a car and who live in outlying  
16 areas depend on the buses, too, get to  
17 their healthcare appointments, get to  
18 their workplaces. Our elderly use  
19 buses a lot to get to church, to the  
20 doctors. And I've seen that throughout  
21 my life when I lived in Pittsburgh and  
22 now when I come in to use buses.

23 So I think eliminating  
24 40-some bus routes, eliminating the  
25 services will be so detrimental to

1 area, I think it will literally shut  
2 our city down. I don't want to see  
3 that happen. So I implore all of you  
4 to do whatever you need to do to save  
5 Pittsburgh's public transit system and  
6 get it up and running normally. It's  
7 very important to us.

8 Thanks.

9 ATTORNEY CENTRA:

10 Thank you, Mary

11 MS. SHANNON:

12 Carol Massengill.

13 MS. MASSENGILL:

14 I can't remember exactly.

15 You know, age is catching up. But for  
16 a long time I worked as a nurse, you  
17 know, and I got injured on the job and  
18 I've got sciatica now. I can walk in  
19 my apartment, but I need the wheelchair  
20 to get around to doctor's appointments  
21 and church. I need the word of God and  
22 anywhere else I have to go. I don't  
23 know what he can do. I'm taking it to  
24 the Lord in prayer. He can touch  
25 hearts.

1                   And I just hope you'll --  
2     - you know, you all will be old one day  
3     and you don't know what condition  
4     you'll be in when you get old. You  
5     know, monetary reversals can happen.  
6     You don't know what you'll end up  
7     being.

8                   But as an older senior  
9     citizen, I'm 74 years old and I moved  
10    Downtown here. We had a fire at the  
11    Roosevelt and I moved from Southside  
12    Downtown. And so it's --- you know,  
13    the buses are good, I get where I need  
14    to go and I'm just hoping that the  
15    service will continue and come up with  
16    the money.

17                  Maybe you can call up  
18    Trump or Elon Musk and say, can you  
19    give us a donation? I don't know  
20    whether other cities are facing this. I  
21    was in Baltimore for a couple years. I  
22    don't know what they're facing, but I'm  
23    just asking you to consider the elderly  
24    children what you're talking about.  
25    That's all I have to say.



1                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

2                   Thank you, Carol.   And  
3   Carol, can you just give us your last  
4   name and spell it?

5                   MS. MASSENGILL:

6                   It's Massengill,  
7   M-A-S-S-E-N-G-I-L-L.

8                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

9                   Thank you.

10                  MS. MASSENGILL:

11                  Thank you.

12                  MS. SHANNON:

13                  David White.

14                  MR. WHITE:

15                  Good afternoon, ladies  
16   and gentlemen.   Although I am excited  
17   to be here, I'm also disappointed that  
18   it's requiring this level of effort.  
19   But I'd like to provide brief comments  
20   both from myself as a person.  
21   W-H-I-T-E is the last --- spelling my  
22   last name.   And in my professional  
23   capacity.

24                  So briefly, personally, I  
25   have five children.   Three of them use

1 PRT to go to and from school every  
2 single day. I cannot overstate the  
3 importance of a fully functional  
4 transportation network in order to  
5 educate our children. And the future  
6 of our children depends on a system  
7 that reliably gets them to school. And  
8 I believe firmly that our public school  
9 system is not the best agency to  
10 provide transit services. I think that  
11 role should rely on our public transit  
12 agency.

13 And so I'm here to  
14 advocate and to express my strong  
15 support that we work together as a  
16 region to solve that for the sake of  
17 our children's future.

18 Secondly, in my  
19 professional role, I'm the executive  
20 director of Bikeshare Pittsburgh. We  
21 are the nonprofit organization that  
22 owns and operates the POGO Bikeshare  
23 system. We consider our services to be  
24 complementary and in support of  
25 transit.

1                   We have a payment  
2           integration that allows a customer, a  
3           user, to use a single sign up to get  
4           both a POGO bike and get onto a PRT  
5           vehicle. And that's deliberate.

6                   And I, from my  
7           professional perspective, believe that  
8           the future of our region, again,  
9           depends on our ability to respond to  
10          our climate changes and our region's  
11          growth by providing reliable public  
12          transportation.

13                   I think that even in our  
14          current federal climate, it's  
15          noteworthy to see that the Department  
16          of Transportation at the federal level  
17          still acknowledges that the  
18          transportation sector is the largest  
19          single contributor to greenhouse gases  
20          in the United States. It's not that  
21          case for many other developed  
22          countries.

23                   And we as a region can  
24          take a strong stance in combating that  
25          with a strong, stable and reliable

1 whole public transportation system.  
2 And I hope to advocate for that in  
3 whatever way that I can professionally.  
4 Thanks very much.

5 ATTORNEY CETRA:

6 Thank you, David.

7 MS. SHANNON:

8 Lydia Morin.

9 MS. MORIN:

10 You guys are keeping it  
11 moving. Thank you. I like to see that  
12 in a transit agency.

13 All right, good morning.  
14 My name is Lydia Morin, and I'm here on  
15 behalf of the Congress of Neighboring  
16 Communities, otherwise known as  
17 CONNECT. We represent municipalities  
18 across Allegheny County, over 50 at  
19 this point, working together to  
20 strengthen the region for residents,  
21 businesses and visitors.

22 And this is a no brainer  
23 and we shouldn't all have to be here  
24 today. Transit isn't just about  
25 getting to work. It's about keeping

1 the entire economy moving. Jobs,  
2 schools, health care, investors,  
3 visitors, major events, they all depend  
4 on transit to work.

5 And even if we don't rely  
6 on transit day to day, possibly because  
7 it's no longer a reliable option for  
8 where we live, we're seeing the  
9 regional need more than ever right now  
10 with the U.S. Open. With 250,000 extra  
11 people flooding our streets, and if we  
12 think about the NFL draft bringing over  
13 750,000 visitors into a city of just  
14 over 300,000, our roads simply can't  
15 handle that without real transit.  
16 Cities that host these events  
17 successfully while also supporting  
18 their own have strong transit systems  
19 that move people quickly, affordable  
20 and reliable.

21 Right now, PRT is doing  
22 the best it can with limited resources,  
23 but many communities still haven't  
24 regained service lost during the  
25 pandemic or prior cuts. Routes aren't

1 restored, frequency is limited, and we  
2 lack flexibility to adapt routes,  
3 vehicles and service to meet today's  
4 needs. The current funding formula is  
5 outdated and the resulting cuts are  
6 extremely dangerous. We need to rally  
7 behind models that really work.

8 CONNECT communities and  
9 partners have done hard work together  
10 with PRT, zoning changes, toolkits and  
11 development plans.

12 Also, people can live and  
13 work near transit and be less dependent  
14 on cars that cost an average of \$12,000  
15 a year to own, ten times more than a  
16 bus pass. And according to national  
17 data from sources like National Safety  
18 Council, APTA and U.S. Department of  
19 Transportation, 60 times more likely to  
20 be injured in a car than a bus. That's  
21 money and energy families could spend  
22 locally building personal and community  
23 wealth.

24 Fully funding PRT long  
25 term means businesses find workers,

1 families have options, visitors have  
2 access, and our region can keep growing  
3 and competing nationally.

4 The plans are ready, the  
5 communities are ready, the businesses  
6 are ready. But we need long term  
7 investment to make it happen and to  
8 make sure this operational budget  
9 works. Thanks, everyone.

10 ATTORNEY CETRA:

11 Thanks, Lydia.

12 MS. SHANNON:

13 Sarah Downing.

14 MS. DOWNING:

15 Thanks everyone. Good  
16 afternoon and thank you for your time.  
17 My name is Sarah Downing, I am the  
18 Director of Operations at CONNECT and  
19 I'm also one of the many folks in the  
20 city who rely on public transit in my  
21 daily life.

22 I would love to just  
23 express the need for reliable and  
24 affordable public transit because I'm  
25 passionate about the 40 local

1 governments in Allegheny County, I have  
2 the privilege to work with at Connect.

3 But I'm also just passionate about  
4 Pittsburgh as a whole and resources.  
5 Reduced or eliminated service impacts  
6 everyone.

7 There's 19  
8 municipalities, including neighborhoods  
9 that could lose service entirely.

10 Daily commutes on transit will be made  
11 impossible. The traffic congestion  
12 will get worse, particularly with  
13 upcoming events that we have that bring  
14 hundreds of thousands of more people.

15 Eliminating late night  
16 Routes will create unsafe situations  
17 for students and night shift workers,  
18 which, as a University of Pittsburgh  
19 grad, is a point that's important to  
20 me. Free transit for students was a  
21 large factor in me for choosing Pitt.  
22 If you're already worrying about paying  
23 rent or paying for your books, trying  
24 to get your work-study job on time, or  
25 getting home from a class that lets out



1 at 9:00, having reliable transportation  
2 is a necessity and just taking takes a  
3 huge weight off your shoulders.

4 Investing in transit to  
5 me isn't just getting people from point  
6 A to point B. It's investing in their  
7 daily lives and their futures because  
8 you're making sure they can get to work  
9 okay on time, making sure kids can get  
10 to school, taking people to doctor's  
11 appointments, and to, you know, public  
12 hearings Downtown to speak about causes  
13 that people really care about. In a  
14 time that I'm sure many people already  
15 alluded to, there's a lot of change and  
16 uncertainty, not only in our region,  
17 but in the country. And your daily  
18 routine should be something that you  
19 can still count on. Thank you.

20 ATTORNEY CETRA:

21 Thank you, Sarah.

22 MS. SHANNON:

23 Eric Dawson.

24 MR. DAWON:

25 Good afternoon everybody.

1       My name is Derek Dawson. I'm the Vice  
2       President of Strategy for Visit  
3       Pittsburgh and I am here on behalf of  
4       Visit Pittsburgh.

5                       Visit Pittsburgh is the  
6       official sales and marketing agency for  
7       Pittsburgh and Allegheny County driving  
8       economic impact to conventions, sports  
9       events and leisure travel. This  
10      industry creates \$6 billion a year in  
11      economic impact in Allegheny County.

12                      It supports over 40,000  
13      jobs here as well. Many of these jobs  
14      are located Downtown and in surrounding  
15      neighborhoods, with workers coming in  
16      from all over the county using public  
17      transit to get here, to get to work and  
18      from work, including myself.

19                      Additionally, visitors  
20      use public transit every day, whether  
21      it's going from the airport to Downtown  
22      on the 28X, Downtown to the North Shore  
23      on the T, Station Square to Mount  
24      Washington on the Mon Incline, or  
25      visiting one of our 90 neighborhoods in

1     150 some municipalities across the  
2     county using public bus lines.

3             Not providing long term  
4     and sustainable funding for support for  
5     the PRT would cause significant impacts  
6     on both people being able to get to and  
7     from work, which causes a significant  
8     ripple effect on the state of the  
9     tourism economy and on visitors  
10    exploring and spending money in  
11    different neighborhoods across  
12    Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.

13            So I ask that long term  
14    sustainable funding support is provided  
15    to the PRT to keep residents and  
16    visitors to our county working and  
17    moving. Thank you.

18            ATTORNEY CETRA:

19            Thank you, Derek.

20            MS. SHANNON:

21            Danielle Wenner.

22            MS. WENNER:

23            Hi, my name is Danielle  
24    Wenner. My last name is spelled  
25    W-E-N-N-E-R. My zip code is 15219.

1 I'm an Associate Professor of  
2 Philosophy and Associate Director of  
3 the Center for Ethics and Policy at  
4 Carnegie Mellon University.

5 I've also been a PRT  
6 rider since first moving to Pittsburgh  
7 in 2013. I've experienced firsthand  
8 what it is like for service to be  
9 reduced and how this impacts my ability  
10 to get around the city.

11 During COVID service was  
12 cut and much of that service still has  
13 not been restored. The result is that  
14 making connections is even more  
15 difficult than ever. It is not  
16 unusual, for example, for a full  
17 outbound bus to stop at Herron Station  
18 just long enough to tell me that it's  
19 too full to let me on. And that's if  
20 it stops at all. But waiting for the  
21 next one more often than not entails  
22 missing a connection.

23 On multiple occasions,  
24 I've had to resort to calling an Uber  
25 to get to where I was going, because a

1 missed connection doesn't mean getting  
2 somewhere a few minutes late. Often  
3 that connection is a bus that only runs  
4 once every 20 or 30 or even 40 minutes,  
5 and missing it can mean missing a  
6 doctor's appointment, being late for  
7 work, or no longer having time in my  
8 day to run that important errand.

9 This is why cuts to  
10 service signal a death spiral for  
11 public transit. Cuts to service make  
12 it harder and less reliable to use  
13 transit, which reduces ridership, which  
14 leads to further cuts.

15 When service is  
16 unreliable or not frequent enough, even  
17 lower, low income riders will be  
18 pressured to buy cars, often at the  
19 expense of other important needs  
20 because they need a reliable way to get  
21 to work, to doctor's appointments, to  
22 kids, schools, et cetera. And once  
23 more people buy cars, they're unlikely  
24 to go back to using a bus. And this  
25 reduces ridership.

1                   It also increases  
2     traffic, it increases stress on our  
3     roads, and it increases pollution in  
4     our city. And all of these outcomes  
5     are bad for everyone.

6                   Finally, many transit  
7     riders can't afford the expense of a  
8     car or cannot drive for age or  
9     disability related reasons. But many  
10    others, including myself, choose not to  
11    drive for pro social reasons. Because  
12    riding transit instead of driving has  
13    other community benefits too. It  
14    reduces wear and tear on our roads, it  
15    reduces greenhouse gas emissions which  
16    impact all of us with that regard to  
17    our geographic location or voting  
18    district. And it reduces traffic which  
19    benefits those who do drive as well as  
20    other users of our streets like  
21    pedestrians and cyclists.

22                  I've seen senators and  
23    representatives from outside of Philly  
24    and Pittsburgh claim that their  
25    constituents should not have to foot

1 the bill to fund transit for the  
2 cities. And I want to say this is  
3 incredibly short sighted.

4 First of all, the Transit  
5 for All Funding Package that's been  
6 proposed aims to improve transit access  
7 in every county of the state by  
8 providing a new dedicated funding  
9 source.

10 But second, and very  
11 important, the Philadelphia and  
12 Pittsburgh regions are the economic  
13 engines of this state. By this I mean  
14 this is where the bulk of economic  
15 activity happens and this is where the  
16 bulk of the state's tax revenues are  
17 generated.

18 Pittsburgh Regional  
19 Transit serves 130,000 riders a day.  
20 SEPTA serves 750,000. More than 42  
21 percent of the state's population lives  
22 within the six primary counties served  
23 by SEPTA and PRT, and that does not  
24 include folks in the extra Allegheny  
25 County Transit shed.

1                   What this means is that  
2                   our biggest economic engines rely on  
3                   transit. And as the current federal  
4                   administration works to engineer a  
5                   recession, the best defense that we  
6                   have as a state is to do whatever we  
7                   can locally to strengthen our economy.  
8                   Thank you.

9                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

10                  Thank you, Danielle.

11                  MS. SHANNON:

12                  Now, we don't have  
13                  another scheduled speaker, so we will  
14                  now take a break. This hearing will go  
15                  off the record during this time. Thank  
16                  you for your patience.

17                  ---

18                  (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS HELD.)

19                  ---

20                  MS. SHANNON:

21                  Just a reminder that this  
22                  session is being recorded and  
23                  transcribed by a court reporter. If  
24                  you do not wish to be recorded, please  
25                  exit the room now.



1                   Each speaker will have  
2 three minutes to provide public  
3 comment. When called, please approach  
4 the speaker's table or podium, clearly  
5 state your full name and spell it  
6 slowly for the record before beginning.  
7

8                   The next speaker is  
9 Angela Wiley.

10                   MS. WILEY:

11                   Hello. Angela Wiley,  
12 A-N-G-E-L-A, W-I-L-E-Y. My zip code is  
13 15206. I live in Highland Park in  
14 Pittsburgh.

15                   I'm hopeful that I will  
16 be lost in a chorus of voices that you  
17 all will hear today and you won't  
18 remember me in an hour. I am just  
19 someone who uses the bus to get to  
20 work. I commute East End to West End.  
21 In a given commute day if I do full bus  
22 I will take up to six buses, three  
23 there, three back. Sometimes I will  
24 add my bike and love using the bike  
25 racks accessible to us.

1                   And I also am here today  
2     to speak on behalf of at least four  
3     colleagues in my building at the  
4     Library Support Center in the West End,  
5     workers at the Carnegie Library of  
6     Pittsburgh who also commute, many of  
7     whom commute East End to West End as  
8     well, several of whom are union hourly  
9     workers who do have to get to work on  
10    time within a grace period.

11                  So with proposed cuts to  
12    routes or major reductions if there is  
13    not state funding to maintain service,  
14    this will impact reliability for all of  
15    us to get to work and do our jobs to  
16    support communities at the Library  
17    Support Center.

18                  I share a car. I do not  
19    have full access to a car and several  
20    of my colleagues who use the buses do  
21    not have the same mobility as I do to  
22    sometimes bike or walk or jog. And so  
23    that funding is really critical for all  
24    of us to be able to do our days.

25                  But I'm also here to

1 advocate for some joy that I feel on  
2 the bus. So once a week I do join my  
3 neighbor and we take the bus together.  
4 And I often see teens who are not now  
5 adults who I worked with when I was in  
6 public service in the libraries. So  
7 it's always very joyful to run into  
8 community members, neighbors who are  
9 also very reliant on our transit.

10 So I am here today to  
11 just advocate for and share not a want,  
12 but a real need to maintain service so  
13 that we can get to work and be  
14 connected to our neighbors. Thank you.

15  
16 ATTORNEY CETRA:

17 Thank you.

18 MS. SHANNON:

19 Brian Hatgelakas.

20 MR. HATGELAKAS:

21 That's me. Okay. Do I  
22 have to spell my name again or no?  
23 Okay.

24 Hello, my name is Brian  
25 Hatgelakas, B-R-I-A-N,

1 H-A-T-G-E-L-A-K-A-S. I'm in the 15216  
2 zip code.

3 And like I said before, I  
4 rely on access to get myself where I  
5 need to go. Defunding things and  
6 cutting things would be devastating to  
7 my survival in Pittsburgh as an  
8 independent man who's blind and who  
9 can't drive. It would be like throwing  
10 my car keys away and telling me, no,  
11 you can't have this car anymore for no  
12 apparent reason.

13 Please keep the lifeblood  
14 going in Pittsburgh. Fund access, do  
15 what you got to do. Just keep  
16 everything vibrant and keep Pittsburgh  
17 a livable city that I know and love it  
18 could be.

19 We should be --- we  
20 shouldn't be here today. We should be  
21 here looking at how to expand the  
22 service and we should look at how to  
23 make it better, not cut it.

24 And also what angers me  
25 is as non car rider --- as an on car

1 rider, I should be treated the same as  
2 a car rider. Yes, I get ACCESS as a  
3 Shareride program, but no, I shouldn't  
4 be forced to wait around and ride  
5 around a trip that takes --- that  
6 should take five minutes from my house,  
7 but takes an hour because of drop offs  
8 and late runs and stuff like that.

9 And I feel bad for the  
10 clients who ride ACCESS, who don't have  
11 a voice, who don't know what's going  
12 on. And that would upend their lives  
13 too. The ones who go to day programs,  
14 who live in group homes, who don't have  
15 a voice for themselves. They need  
16 stability in their lives. They need to  
17 be able to get where they're going to  
18 do. Everybody does.

19 Please take a look at  
20 yourselves, the State of Pennsylvania  
21 and fund this. Make sure that I'm not  
22 here speaking in ten years. Thank you.

23  
24 ATTORNEY CETRA:

25 Thank you, Brian.

1                   MS. SHANNON:

2                   Annetta Butler.

3                   MS. BUTLER:

4                   My name is Annetta  
5 Butler, A-N-N-E-T-T-A. Last name  
6 Butler, B-U-T-L-E-R. I guess thank you  
7 today for this hearing. I just heard  
8 this today, so.

9                   I've been riding Port  
10 Authority, PRT for about like seven  
11 years now. This is really important to  
12 me, especially now because I go to  
13 school at CCAC at Allegheny. So it's  
14 like I really hope what we can do with  
15 the funding --- really I want to like  
16 spread like all the routes like thin on  
17 like how many buses a day, an hour.

18                   Because for example I do  
19 live in Arlington Heights which is kind  
20 of like Upper South Side. Say for  
21 example I go down like on East Carson  
22 20th and it's like I'm waiting for the  
23 48. It's like I get three, four, or  
24 maybe five --- like at a time before I  
25 see a 48 and I'm just like what's

1     happening?   Like I just hope we can  
2     like spread it thin like have more  
3     buses for every route because I feel  
4     like it's important to everyone that  
5     like uses 48, whatever bus.

6                     I also feel like we  
7     should increase the prices of a regular  
8     bus fare.   I feel that --- I feel bad  
9     for some of the people that don't even  
10    have money just to even go down the  
11    street.   And it's like I feel bad for  
12    them.   And it's like I would want to  
13    pay their fare for them.

14                    I just hope we can make  
15    like --- to the fare and hopefully we  
16    can like make it fair for everyone.  
17    Disabled people, regular people,  
18    students.   Like I just want to be fair  
19    for everyone.

20                    ATTORNEY CETRA:

21                    Thank you.

22                    MS. SHANNON:

23                    Ryan Matthews.

24                    MR. MATTHEWS:

25                    Hello, my name is Ryan

1 Matthews. R-Y-A-N, M-A-T-T-H-E-W-S.

2 For most of my life I  
3 lived up the hill from Washington  
4 Junction and Duff Park. For those of  
5 you who don't know, that is the primo  
6 South Hills Park & Ride T station.  
7 That's because all of the trains pass  
8 through there before they split off in  
9 various directions. So you can catch  
10 any train.

11 This January of 2025, I  
12 bought a house near the end of the  
13 Silver Line. My zip code is 15102,  
14 Bethel Park. At five months in, it's  
15 really feeling like a home to me. It's  
16 been a fun year so far. Already some  
17 nice memories.

18 One day I rode the Silver  
19 Line to my parents' house for a pizza  
20 dinner get together. Another time I  
21 took the Silver Line at Bethel Bakery  
22 to buy some cookies and I got back on  
23 and continued my journey. On Easter  
24 Sunday I rode the Silver Line to my  
25 Aunt's house for dinner. As you can



1 tell I really like food.

2 The Friday of Memorial  
3 Day weekend I brought the Silver and  
4 Blue Lines to my grandparents' house to  
5 cut their grass. I bought a 20 pound  
6 bag of ice from the grocery store in  
7 preparation for Sunday night's party.  
8 I brought it back to grandma's house.  
9 I went back home.

10 I definitely did some  
11 running and some walking during that  
12 journey. I rode six different trains  
13 inside of a three hour time window.  
14 \$2.75. Awesome.

15 One day I went down the  
16 Silver Line to Ledbury Station. I  
17 cycled on the Montour Trail, up the  
18 South Park Connector Trail, up Oregon  
19 Drive, up South Park Road. From there  
20 I rode the T back down the Silver Line  
21 to go home.

22 Another time I rode the T  
23 from the Silver Line to Downtown for  
24 work. Also walked to the thrift  
25 district and bought a fresh loaf of

1 Mancini's bread.

2 I once rode up the Silver  
3 Line and back down the Blue Line to  
4 South Hills Village Mall where I went  
5 shopping. Today I rode the T from the  
6 end of the Silver Line to Downtown  
7 Pittsburgh to attend this PRT hearing.

8  
9 The T defines the  
10 character of Bethel Park. The Silver  
11 Line is most of that. It runs right  
12 down the middle of the main drag where  
13 City Hall is. Did you know that? And  
14 the library and the police station and  
15 the church and all sorts of things.

16 So my message right now  
17 is Dear PRT, dear Pennsylvania, even  
18 dear Federal government, please don't  
19 mess this up. Please don't ruin my  
20 home. Thank you.

21 ATTONREY CETRA:

22 Thank you, Ryan.

23 MS. SHANNON:

24 Willie Kyte. His name  
25 was just added so might want to give

1 him a minute, just in case. Willie  
2 Kyte?

3 MR. KYTE:

4 My name is Willie Kyte,  
5 W-I-L-L-I-E, K-Y-T-E. My zip code is  
6 15236 and I'm calling because --- I'm  
7 here because that's the only bus that  
8 go out this way and it already don't  
9 run on Sundays anyway. So can't leave  
10 the house on Sundays.

11 And if y'all cut the  
12 hours back a little bit, I can't say  
13 I'm going to get back and forth to my  
14 job. So I can't tell you what to  
15 really do. I don't really know what to  
16 say about it. That my bus is going to  
17 start running and I'm have to stay in  
18 the house for now.

19 ATTORNEY CETRA:

20 Thank you.

21 MS. SHANNON:

22 We have no more  
23 registered speakers on our list but I  
24 want to remind folks that if you  
25 registered online or if you showed up

1     today to make sure to check in with the  
2     table out there with PRT staff to make  
3     sure that they know that you're here  
4     and you do want to speak. This session  
5     ends at 1:00, so make sure that you are  
6     signed up.

7                     ---

8     (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS HELD.)

9                     ---

10                    ATTORNEY CETRA:

11                    Okay, it is now going on  
12     1:00 p.m. That was the time the PRT  
13     publicly advertised to take our break.  
14     So we will go off the record from 1:00  
15     p.m. to 3:00 p.m. We will resume with  
16     the afternoon portion of our hearing at  
17     3:00 p.m. Thank you.

18                    ---

19     (WHEREUPON, A BREAK WAS HELD.)

20                    ---

21                    \* \* \* \* \*

22                    HEARING CONCLUDED AT 1:00 P.M.

23                    \* \* \* \* \*

## 1 CERTIFICATE

2  
3 I hereby certify, as the stenographic  
4 reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were  
5 taken stenographically by me, and thereafter  
6 reduced to typewriting by me or under my  
7 direction; and that this transcript is a true  
8 and accurate record to the best of my ability.  
9 Dated the 26th day of June, 2025

10  
11   
12 Chelsea Curry,

13 Court Reporter  
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# Public Hearing 3

**Date: 6/12/2025**

**Location: Convention Center**

**Room: Main**

**Time: Afternoon**

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED  
SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND FARE INCREASE

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: WILLIAM GASIOR,  
Hearing Moderator  
Katherine Kelleman, Member  
Tom Burgunder, Member  
Charles Reeves, Member  
Amy Silbermann, Member  
Donminika Brown, Member  
Don Rivetti, Member  
Mike Cetra, Member  
Jeffrey Devlin, Member  
HEARING: Thursday, June 12, 2025  
3:00 p.m.  
LOCATION: David L. Lawrence  
Convention Center  
Room 302-304, 3rd Floor  
1000 Ft. Duquesne Boulevard  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

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by the certifying agency.

WITNESSES: None offered

Reporter: Chelsea Noll



## A P P E A R A N C E S

ALSO PRESENT:

|                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| KAREN HOESCH        | ISABELLE STANLEY |
| SHAWN PASTOR        | MICHAEL SHALL    |
| LENA ANDREWS        | TOM STERBAL      |
| KEITH ZAMBORSKY     | JAMES SANTELLI   |
| ELISE MACDONALD     | MASON BROOKS     |
| ANN SANDERS         | NA-IR JOHNSON    |
| PATRICIA HERNANDEZ  | DAVID WILLIAMSON |
| CHRIS ROSSELOT      | DAVID MCKENNA    |
| NANCY LEVERETT      | EMILY POTOCHNY   |
| SAMUEL ALTMANN      | ARLENE MEYERS    |
| CHRIS SANDVIG       | TRAVIS BARKEFELT |
| PEGGY WALSH         | RENEE WRIGHT     |
| ANGELA MARTINEZ     | SEAN CALLAHAN    |
| PETE BIANCO         | DIANE REYNOLDS   |
| CHRISTINE AMY HABAS | TAYVEON SMITH    |
| SAM SPEAR           | MAIA BRYANT      |
| JEFFREY HUFF        | ZIA LYLE         |
| ANDREW HUSSEIN      | NATALIE BULLOCK  |
| CHRISTINE HUNSINGER | LENA WOODCOCK    |
| SEAN LUTHER         | POETIC SESSION   |
| FRANCIS ULRICH      | HANNAH YOMI      |
| GRANT THOMAS        | SAM POPIVCHAK    |

## A P P E A R A N C E S (cont.)

ALSO PRESENT CONT.:

|                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| ROBERT HELWIG    | TAIMA ROSS         |
| REBECCA CARLSON  | ROSS NICOTERO, III |
| JULIE DAW        | JARED HELFER       |
| DANIELLE GRENTZ  |                    |
| PHYLLIS DIDIANO  |                    |
| SUE PFEUFFER     |                    |
| LESLIE NUNLEY    |                    |
| SAM SPEARING     |                    |
| KRISTIN GREEN    |                    |
| TAKUMI DAVIS     |                    |
| ELIZABETH BURTON |                    |
| AMBER BROWNSTEIN |                    |
| SEAN GREEN       |                    |
| CHARLOTTE FORD   |                    |
| ROXANNE HUBER    |                    |
| KIM JACKSON      |                    |
| KELDA GORMAN     |                    |
| JEWHARU WILLIAMS |                    |
| CHAVAYSHA CHANEY |                    |
| JOAQUIN CB       |                    |
| CAROLYN FULWIDER |                    |
| RICH JACKSON     |                    |

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194

I N D E X

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|--------------------------|-----------|
| DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES | 196 - 409 |
| CERTIFICATE              | 410       |

## E X H I B I T S

| <u>Number</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Page</u><br><u>Offered</u> |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
|               | NONE               | OFFERED                       |

## P R O C E E D I N G S

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MS. KELLEMAN:

Good afternoon. It is now 3:00 p.m., and the public hearing will resume. As a reminder, this hearing is being recorded and transcribed by a Court Reporter. So if you do not want to be recorded, please exit the hearing room now.

Each speaker has up to three minutes to provide public comment, and should come up to the speaker's table when called upon and state their name clearly and spell it for the Court Reporter before beginning to provide your public comment.

Additionally, the purpose of this public hearing is for PRT to receive public comments. So our Board members and staff will be listening to your comments. We will not be answering questions or actively responding to your comments. Questions can be directed to PRT staff members

1       stationed at the information tables  
2       outside the hearing room.

3               So short version, the  
4       intent here is to keep your three  
5       minutes so you can speak on the record.  
6       If you have questions, if you have  
7       anything to discuss, we have folks on  
8       the outside that can answer the  
9       questions. That preserves your time  
10      for your comment, and make sure that  
11      everybody else has that same  
12      opportunity. I promise it's not to be  
13      mean.

14              Then I think that is it.  
15      So we are ready to go, and I'll turn it  
16      over to --- to our next table. Thank  
17      you.

18              MR. GASIOR:

19              Great. Next on our list  
20      is --- next on our list is Shawn  
21      Pastor.

22              MR. PASTOR:

23              Shawn Pastor, S-H-A-W-N  
24      P-A-S-T-O-R. I am zip code 15228.

25              Cutting the 38, well, 36,

1       38, 41, the ones that I should be  
2       taking, that would be an absolute  
3       devastating. That'd be absolutely  
4       devastating. People use that service  
5       literally every day. That's --- that's  
6       ridiculous because nobody would want to  
7       go on the Red Line. It's --- the Red  
8       Line takes too long, too many stops.  
9       There are --- there is riff raff on  
10      there sometimes, which should be  
11      addressed.

12                       But if these cuts go  
13      through, that's probably everybody's  
14      option. It's not --- it's not pretty.  
15      We need to seriously start thinking  
16      that we need more service. And I mean  
17      more service, I mean more service on  
18      the 36. Not this 8:00 --- 8:00 p.m.  
19      crap ending, and it's --- it's not,  
20      like I said, that 8:00 p.m. trip 36 is  
21      not a good bummer. That should be at  
22      least running until 10 o'clock. Add at  
23      least two more trips.

24                       Quit --- quit cutting  
25      service. People rely on it. I rely on

1       it every day because I don't drive. I  
2       usually walk, but I shouldn't have to.  
3       It's just, it's hard. It really is.  
4       It's hard for everybody to live life  
5       when you want to cut --- you want to  
6       cut everybody's service in Mount  
7       Lebanon, Dormont. It's just nobody  
8       wants to live that way.

9                       And if you cut that ---  
10       if you cut service, what are people  
11       going to do. What are people going to  
12       do? They're going to be stuck.  
13       They're going to be stranded.

14                      TIMEKEEPER:

15                      One minute left.

16                      MR. PASTOR:

17                      Thank you. There's ---  
18       there's no reason for that. No reason  
19       for these cuts to happen. Please,  
20       please don't do it. Please don't do  
21       it. I don't want to be a victim of  
22       being stuck somewhere, and I got to  
23       walk from Chartiers Valley Shopping  
24       Center all the way to Mount Lebanon  
25       Station. You know how long a walk that



1 would be without no sidewalks? That  
2 would be a very major --- that would be  
3 a very major accident waiting to  
4 happen. Someone getting run over,  
5 someone getting hit. No, we don't need  
6 any of that.

7 Don't cut service. Leave  
8 it how it is, or add service. Even  
9 though I know now there's an operator  
10 availability that we have a problem  
11 with. But we need to, like I said,  
12 don't cut service. Please add it.  
13 Don't cut it. We don't need that.  
14 Thank you.

15 MR. GASIOR:

16 Thank you. Next on our  
17 list is Lena Andrews.

18 MS. ANDREWS:

19 Hi, everyone. My name is  
20 Lena Andrews, L-E-N-A A-N-D-R-E-W-S,  
21 and I'm here representing Action  
22 Housing. Our zip code is 15219. Okay.

23 So thank you for the  
24 opportunity to speak today. My name is  
25 Lena Andrews. I'm the CEO of Action

1     Housing.    Action Housing is a nonprofit  
2     organization dedicated to providing  
3     safe, affordable housing and supportive  
4     to individuals and families across  
5     Allegheny County.    I'm here today  
6     because public transit is not just a  
7     transportation issue, it is also a  
8     housing issue.    At Action Housing, we  
9     work with seniors, people with  
10    disabilities, low income families, and  
11    individuals transitioning out of  
12    homelessness.    For many of them, owning  
13    a car is not an option.    Public transit  
14    is their lifeline.

15                    When service is cut and  
16    fares are raised, it's not just  
17    inconvenient, it's devastating.    It  
18    means missed job interviews, missed  
19    paychecks, and missed opportunities.  
20    Every day, the people we serve rely on  
21    Pittsburgh Regional Transit to get to  
22    work, school, medical appointments, and  
23    the services that help them build  
24    better lives.    Without reliable  
25    transportation, our clients face

1 barriers that can jeopardize their  
2 employment, their health, and their  
3 housing.

4 Transit is also essential  
5 to the success of affordable housing.  
6 We strategically locate our  
7 developments near transit lines because  
8 we know that housing without access to  
9 them can never be truly affordable.  
10 When transit service is reduced, the  
11 value and the viability of these  
12 developments are compromised, and the  
13 people who live there suffer.

14 We strongly support PRT's  
15 request for an infusion of state  
16 funding with annual increases to keep  
17 pace with rising costs. This  
18 investment is not just about  
19 maintaining buses and routes. It's  
20 about maintaining access, equity, and  
21 opportunity for thousands of  
22 Pennsylvanians. We urge our state  
23 leaders to recognize that public  
24 transit is a critical part of the  
25 infrastructure that holds our

1 communities together. The time to act  
2 is now. We cannot afford to let our  
3 transit system fall into crisis.

4 On behalf of Action  
5 Housing and the thousands of people we  
6 serve, we ask you to support Pittsburgh  
7 Regional Transit. Thank you.

8 MR. GASIOR:

9 Thank you. Next on our  
10 list is Keith Zamborsky. As a  
11 reminder, you have three minutes for  
12 your public comment. To help our Court  
13 Reporter, please state your full name  
14 again, and spell it slowly and clearly  
15 before you begin.

16 MR. ZAMBORSKY:

17 Hello, I'm Keith  
18 Zamborsky, K-E-I-T-H Z-A-M-B-O-R-S-K-Y.

19 Good afternoon. I do  
20 ride the bus every day. So, I am quite  
21 familiar with the buses and all. I  
22 have this paper stating the cuts that  
23 you want to do. I ride the 14 all the  
24 time. Like, I get from home all the  
25 way to, what is that? Harmar. That's

1       about 25 miles. Without the 14, I can  
2       take the 16, but that's like a four  
3       hour --- four mile walk every day. I  
4       do that on Saturdays because I  
5       volunteer for work. On Saturdays. I'd  
6       be forced to do that all the time.

7               I've done a lot of  
8       walking, but can't keep up with that.  
9       I need the bus service. It's a good  
10      job. I don't want to have to go and  
11      find another place. I worked at a bad  
12      place before. People were lemons. The  
13      work wasn't too bad, but I'm at a good  
14      place now, and I want to stay there.

15             For that ACCESS one, you  
16      want to cut that. No, my mom needs  
17      that. She is getting older now, and we  
18      need that for groceries. She doesn't  
19      drive anymore. So, it's hard finding  
20      people to help us. A couple people  
21      here and there, but kind of stuck.

22             So it's the 1 Freeport  
23      Road mainly, and the 14 that I need. I  
24      depend on it. But I was kind of  
25      shocked to see all of the buses that

1 are to be cut. I just hope you do get  
2 the funding that you need, and  
3 continue. That's about it. Thanks.

4 MR. GASIOR:

5 Thank you. Next on our  
6 list is Elise MacDonald.

7 MS. MACDONALD:

8 Good afternoon, Elise  
9 MacDonald, but I live in Brookline.  
10 That's E-L-I-S-E. MacDonald, M-A-C-D-  
11 O-N-A-L-D. I live in Brookline, 15226.

12 My husband Rob and I  
13 moved to the city about a year ago  
14 after visiting friends here many times  
15 over a decade. Transit was a big  
16 reason why we moved here from a small,  
17 car centric city in New Hampshire, when  
18 Rob retired last year from his 30 year  
19 career as a city letter carrier for the  
20 USPS, the postal system.

21 Pittsburgh is promoted  
22 nationally as a great place to retire,  
23 and access to transit is a substantial  
24 part of those exact ratings. Plenty of  
25 retired people can no longer safely

1 drive, particularly in a complex hilly,  
2 3D city like Pittsburgh. Or we don't  
3 want to drive or we must spend less due  
4 to a fixed income. So for going the  
5 estimated \$12,000 plus that it takes to  
6 own a vehicle, or even a basic vehicle,  
7 is --- it's a necessity.

8 We use transit personally  
9 to get to medical appointments, to  
10 shopping, to the wealth of arts and  
11 cultural events in the city, and to a  
12 lot of volunteering that we do, both in  
13 downtown and in Oakland. We  
14 painstakingly chose our new place in  
15 Brookline in large part because it is  
16 located smack dab right between a three  
17 to four minute walk to two bus lines,  
18 the 39 and the 41. The Red Line in  
19 Beechview is a 15 minute walk away, but  
20 it is an extremely hilly walk. It's  
21 mountaineering.

22 I joined so many other  
23 Pittsburghers who have transit as a  
24 chief concern in their housing.  
25 Nothing is more foundational. After

1 all the work, research, planning,  
2 stress, and consideration that it took  
3 for us to move to Pittsburgh from New  
4 England, learning that both of the PRT  
5 bus lines near us are at risk for being  
6 discontinued has been quite  
7 devastating.

8 Thank you for making this  
9 opportunity for Pittsburgh's transit  
10 riders to be heard today. I also thank  
11 you for all the work that you've done  
12 in trying to appeal to the state. We  
13 had a lovely time in Harrisburg last  
14 week lobbying with the help of three,  
15 wonderful, new PRT buses. And we thank  
16 you for that and for your time today.  
17 Thank you.

18 MR. GASIOR:

19 Thank you. Next on our  
20 list is Ann Sanders. As a reminder,  
21 you have three minutes for your public  
22 comment. To help our Court Reporter,  
23 please state your full name again, and  
24 spell it slowly and clearly before you  
25 begin speaking.



1                   MS. SANDERS:

2                   Sure.   Ann Sanders, A-N-N  
3                   S-A-N-D-E-R-S.

4                   Hi everyone, my name's  
5                   Ann.   I work at Just Harvest, which is  
6                   a local nonprofit dedicated to ending  
7                   hunger in Allegheny County. We do that  
8                   by focusing on addressing some of the  
9                   root causes of hunger, amongst which is  
10                  financial security. We know that lack  
11                  of access to transportation is one of  
12                  the key barriers in our region to  
13                  getting and keeping a job, and it is  
14                  also the second largest barrier,  
15                  according to USDA, to accessing healthy  
16                  food. About one in five SNAP  
17                  recipients say that they need --- that  
18                  needing transportation to a grocery  
19                  store was one of the key barriers in  
20                  their ability to maintain a healthy  
21                  diet.

22                  Affordability and  
23                  accessibility of transit is key to the  
24                  economic and social wellbeing of our  
25                  region. The cuts and fare increases

1       being proposed to address the state  
2       funding shortfall that PRT faces would  
3       be astronomically devastating. The  
4       fare increases, we already know that we  
5       have some of the highest fares in the  
6       nation. I would like to thank PRT for  
7       implementing Allegheny Go, but we know  
8       that we still have a long way to go to  
9       make transit affordable and accessible  
10      for everyone in this region, and fare  
11      increases will further reduce ---  
12      further reduce ridership and pose  
13      barriers for all riders.

14               In every region of our  
15      county, we know there are people are  
16      who can't afford access to a personal  
17      vehicle or they rely on paratransit to  
18      meet their basic needs, such as  
19      visiting a doctor, going to the grocery  
20      store, and participating in their  
21      community. A 40 percent reduction in  
22      service is unfathomably crippling for a  
23      region.

24               The cuts that are  
25      outlined in the proposal would leave a

1        few food deserts completely without  
2        service namely, Brackenridge and  
3        Trafford. It did look like, when I  
4        compared the maps, that you tried  
5        really hard to keep those low income  
6        communities with some level of service,  
7        but it wasn't possible. So yeah, those  
8        two communities would --- that are  
9        marked as food desert regions where  
10       there's not access to a grocery store  
11       would lose, well, their service.

12                    TIMEKEEPER:

13                    One minute left.

14                    MS. SANDERS:

15                    Thank you. Not  
16        guaranteeing access to paratransit for  
17        large swaths of our county would lock  
18        out elderly and disabled folks from  
19        vital services. And I just wanted to  
20        share that based on employment, we  
21        already have huge gaps in our service  
22        that leads employers to finding it  
23        challenging to fill jobs as well as  
24        posing a hindrance to those who seek  
25        work, from being able to find and keep

1       it.

2                       Personally, when I was in  
3       my 20s, I actually worked right across  
4       the street at the hotel, 3:00 to 11:00  
5       p.m. shift, and that was possible  
6       because of buses. And so, having that  
7       11:00 p.m. curfew would have made that  
8       impossible for me.

9                       A lack of sustainable and  
10       ongoing investment in our transit  
11       system puts the health and wellbeing of  
12       our region at risk. And we support and  
13       encourage our state leaders in fully  
14       funding transit and finding revenue  
15       sources that fully fund our region's  
16       needs. Thank you.

17                      MR. GASIOR:

18                      Thank you. Next on our  
19       list is Patricia Hernandez.

20                      MS. HERNANDEZ:

21                      Hello. Do I just speak  
22       right here? Can you hear me?

23                      MR. GASIOR:

24                      Please speak, yeah. That  
25       one.

1                   MS. HERNANDEZ:

2                   This one?    Okay.

3                   My name is Patricia  
4                   Hernandez, like all the baseball  
5                   players, but not related, H-E-R-N-A-N-  
6                   D-E-Z.

7                   I've been riding a bus,  
8                   Port Authority Transit System, since  
9                   1970.    From Ambridge, used to catch the  
10                  16AL bus.    Worked how many years in the  
11                  city in a slash hospitality restaurant  
12                  business.    Sometimes you get off late,  
13                  11:00, 12 o'clock.    Thank God there was  
14                  always buses, East Hills buses to get  
15                  home.    And I was always able to catch a  
16                  bus.    I do my shopping, my grocery  
17                  shopping, entertainment, restaurant,  
18                  volunteer.    I live in Bluefield, so I'm  
19                  very accessible to everything, but this  
20                  11 o'clock --- oh, I wanted to make a  
21                  good combination.    I appreciate the  
22                  Port Authority's senior citizen connect  
23                  car because I ride.    The best thing you  
24                  ever did was a 64A Lawrenceville  
25                  because you can't --- now you don't

1 have to go to Oakland to go to there  
2 and get the bus and there.

3 And then the 52, 54C, I'm  
4 glad you rerouted that route because  
5 that was a waste of time going all  
6 around, whatever. So any who, you did  
7 some good things too, but this 11  
8 o'clock curfew isn't going to work. My  
9 sister worked at the Presby Hospital  
10 years and years. Got off at 11:00,  
11 didn't always make it at 11:00. Took  
12 the bus home.

13 I know --- I know  
14 hundreds of people. They go from the  
15 hospital to town to make a connection.  
16 Same as in the hospitality business.  
17 There's times I didn't get out until  
18 12:00, one o'clock, but there was a  
19 bus.

20 So, when you're  
21 curtailng bus service, the sports  
22 things coming up, the big thing next  
23 year, who's --- who's going to be able  
24 to go to work? They want people to  
25 stay in the city. You have to have

1 service. Handicapped people, I ride  
2 that --- the buses in the city.  
3 There's so many people, God bless them  
4 to take. They get on those wheelchairs  
5 and walkers and everything. That they  
6 really need the service to get where  
7 they have to go.

8 I didn't look at the  
9 list, but I don't know what was cut.  
10 But it's --- I think it's just a, you  
11 know, it's going to be a very, very sad  
12 thing if people can't get to a bus when  
13 they need to get a bus.

14 And whatever, 11 o'clock.  
15 I got my list here, but a few other  
16 things that, I don't know if I can  
17 complain now, but I'm at the bus stop  
18 waiting for this 86. 91A, four buses  
19 go by. No Liberty. I don't know why  
20 that is, but it's very upsetting if  
21 you're running all these buses. And  
22 then when I'm on a 54C during college  
23 time, you can't get on a bus because  
24 there's kids, students. Why can't you  
25 have a long bus that takes --- picks

1 everybody up when they need to?

2 Same as a GE busway. I'm  
3 sitting at the bus stop. Four Westway  
4 buses go by with nobody on them. I'm  
5 just thinking of cutting expenses. You  
6 know, I'm just thinking how you can  
7 save money. I don't --- I'm not on  
8 your thing, but I just know I cut  
9 money. There's certain things I don't  
10 use. Thank you. Thank you.

11 MR. GASIOR:

12 Thank you. Next on our  
13 list is Chris Rosselot. As a reminder,  
14 you have three minutes for your public  
15 comment. To help our Court Reporter,  
16 please state your name again, and spell  
17 it slowly and clearly before you begin  
18 speaking.

19 MR. ROSSELOT:

20 Great, thank you. Again,  
21 Chris Rosselot, R-O-S-S-E-L-O-T, as in  
22 Tom, and zip code is 15212.

23 Good afternoon. My name  
24 is Chris Rosselot, Policy Director at  
25 Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment



1 Group, and a resident of Pittsburgh's  
2 north side. I'm here today on behalf  
3 of our coalition of neighborhood based  
4 organizations and community leaders to  
5 express our strong support for  
6 Pittsburgh Regional Transit, and to  
7 urge state officials to prevent the  
8 devastating cuts that are projected  
9 without additional state funding.

10 Public transit is not a  
11 luxury. It is a lifeline for so many  
12 of the communities that we serve. For  
13 residents in our region, especially in  
14 historically disinvested neighborhoods,  
15 transit is how they get to work, to  
16 school, to doctor's appointments, and  
17 to places that sustain their families.  
18 Let's be clear. This is not just about  
19 who rides the bus or the T. It's about  
20 who keeps our region running. It's  
21 about the nursing assistant working a  
22 night shift at a hospital, the student  
23 taking two transfers to get to school,  
24 like my daughter. The retail worker  
25 who can't afford a car, which continues

1 to get more and more expensive to  
2 maintain, by the way, and seniors and  
3 people with disabilities who depend on  
4 access just to live their daily lives.

5 If these cuts go through,  
6 we are going to see economic pain  
7 ripple across the region. Workers will  
8 lose jobs, businesses will lose  
9 customers, families will be stranded,  
10 and most of our vulnerable neighbors  
11 will pay the highest price.

12 As an organization  
13 committed to equitable development, we  
14 know that with reliable --- without  
15 reliable transit, none of our other  
16 work on housing, economic mobility, or  
17 financial empowerment can succeed.  
18 We're grateful for Governor Shapiro's  
19 proposal to increase the share of sales  
20 and use tax dedicated to transit, but  
21 we also know that it's not enough.

22 TIMEKEEPER

23 One minute left.

24 MR. ROSSELOT:

25 PRT needs an additional

1       \$117 million annually starting in FY  
2       2026 just to maintain current service  
3       levels and avoid this crisis. So  
4       today, we are calling on local leaders,  
5       and most importantly, our state  
6       legislators. Make transit funding a  
7       priority. Establish a long term,  
8       reliable, and dedicated source of  
9       funding for public transportation in  
10      Pennsylvania. Thank you.

11                   MR. GASIOR:

12                   Thank you. Next on our  
13      list, we have Nancy Leverett. As a  
14      reminder, you have three minutes for  
15      public comment. To help our Court  
16      Reporter, please state your full name  
17      again, and spell it slowly and clearly  
18      before you begin.

19                   MS. LEVERETT:

20                   Oh, other side? Thank  
21      you. Hi, I'm Nancy Leverett. That's  
22      N-A-N-C-Y. Leverett, L-E-V-E-R-E-T-T.  
23      And I live at 759 Lebanon Avenue in  
24      Mount Lebanon. And I am here to  
25      represent myself as a visually impaired

1 individual, and also represent the  
2 organization that I am the president  
3 of. I'm the president of Western  
4 Pennsylvania Blind Outdoor Leisure  
5 Development, and we usually shorten  
6 that to WPA BOLD, B-O-L-D.

7 And I'm here to express  
8 what a problem it'll be for the  
9 visually impaired, for me and for my  
10 organization if these transit cuts go  
11 through. We're going to lose service.  
12 We're going to have visually impaired  
13 members who will have access to no  
14 public transportation. And if you  
15 can't see, you can't drive a car. And  
16 also, a lot of people that are visually  
17 impaired, their choices as far as where  
18 they can live are very limited based on  
19 their income or their particular living  
20 situation. They just can't move, and  
21 they aren't going to have anywhere, any  
22 way to get anywhere on public  
23 transportation. They can't get to  
24 work, doctor's appointments, the  
25 grocery store, or for our organization.

1 They cannot participate in the  
2 activities that we provide for them.  
3 There are social, cultural, and outdoor  
4 leisure activities.

5 TIMEKEEPER:

6 One minute left.

7 MS. LEVERETT:

8 So I really feel very  
9 strongly for myself personally and for  
10 my organization, and for the people  
11 that I represent that this would be a  
12 devastating thing for us if this would  
13 go through. Thank you.

14 MR. GASIOR:

15 Okay.

16 Next on our list, we have  
17 Samuel Altmann. As a reminder, you  
18 have three minutes for public comment.  
19 To help our Court Reporter, please  
20 state your name, full name again, and  
21 spell it slowly and clearly before you  
22 begin speaking.

23 MR. ALTMANN:

24 My name is Samuel  
25 Altmann. Last name is A-L-T-M-A-N-N.

1 I live in Beechview. My zip code is  
2 15216. Okay.

3 I did use public transit  
4 to get here now. Now I am a part time  
5 Lyft driver, and I drive mostly in the  
6 evenings. And one of the things that  
7 disturbs me is that any time after, say  
8 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. throughout the rest  
9 of the evening, most of --- most, if  
10 not all of, PRT transit vehicles are  
11 largely empty. And that disturbs me  
12 because that seems to me to be an  
13 environmental waste of fuel as well as  
14 maintenance on these large vehicles,  
15 which probably costs a lot over time.

16 Wouldn't it make more  
17 sense to switch, later in the evenings,  
18 to minibuses which would be far more  
19 economically feasible in terms of  
20 savings, both environmentally and in  
21 terms of just in general maintenance  
22 over the long run? Because --- and  
23 plus, they would be so much easier to  
24 maneuver late at night on small  
25 streets, et cetera. So, that's one of

1 the issues that I have.

2 Now, the other issue I  
3 have is that I've just come back from a  
4 three week plus trip to six different  
5 countries in Europe, and I used  
6 exclusively public transit in Europe.  
7 And in every case, and in many large  
8 cities, and in every case without  
9 exception, the vehicles are much  
10 cleaner than here and much more  
11 efficient. And frequently, the --- at  
12 the stations, they have the exact time  
13 digitally posted when the next vehicle  
14 for each of the lines arrives.

15 And it seems like we are  
16 kind of backwards here in that regard.  
17 And basically, those are the concerns  
18 that I have. But I do use it  
19 regularly. It would be wonderful to  
20 have it run later in the evenings for  
21 people like me who sometimes come  
22 downtown for theater events or the  
23 concert at Heinz Hall. And then it's  
24 impossible if --- if the cutoff would  
25 be 11 o'clock or whatever, it would be

1 impossible to go out afterwards with a  
2 friend to have a drink somewhere before  
3 one heads home. So, that's my concern  
4 about the cutoff being much earlier.  
5 Thank you very much.

6 MR. SANDVIG:

7 Are you all waiting for  
8 someone?

9 MR. GASIOR:

10 Yeah. At this time, we  
11 don't have anybody else scheduled right  
12 now. But if you'd like to take the  
13 podium?

14 MR. SANDVIG:

15 Sure, I'll talk.

16 MS. KELLEMAN:

17 You have to go register  
18 though.

19 MR. GASIOR:

20 Yeah, you have to.

21 MR. SANDVIG:

22 Do I?

23 MR. GASIOR:

24 Yeah, please ---.

25 MS. KELLEMAN:



1 Yes, you do.

2 MR. SANDVIG:

3 I'll be back.

4 MS. HERNANDEZ:

5 Can I ask one question?

6 Who --- who would we address about the  
7 funding? The funding for the Port  
8 Authority? Is there a specific person  
9 we can call or?

10 MS. KELLEMAN:

11 We can connect you with  
12 --- hold on, hold on. So sorry.

13 MS. HERNANDEZ:

14 That's all right.

15 MS. KELLEMAN:

16 You are taken care of, so  
17 I'm going to stop.

18 MS. HERNANDEZ:

19 Thank you.

20 ATTORNEY CETRA:

21 What time is our next  
22 scheduled speaker? I'm sorry, next  
23 scheduled speaker?

24 MR. GASIOR:

25 That gentleman's going to

1 go register, so he'll probably be right  
2 back in.

3 ATTORNEY CETRA:

4 Right, after that?

5 MR. GASIOR:

6 And then, yeah.

7 ATTORNEY CETRA:

8 Okay.

9 MR. GASIOR:

10 But there isn't any.

11 3:30, yeah. Yeah, we're up to date.

12 No, I don't have a pen or a marker,  
13 nope.

14 Next on our list is Chris  
15 Sandvig. As a reminder, you have three  
16 minutes for your public comment. To  
17 help Court Reporter, please state your  
18 full name again, and spell it slowly  
19 and clearly before you begin speaking.  
20 Thank you.

21 MR. SANDVIG:

22 Yes, hi. Chris Sandvig,  
23 C-H-R-I-S. Last name S-A-N-D-V-I-G.

24 I work --- represent an  
25 organization that I founded called

1 Mobilify Southwestern Pennsylvania.  
2 And also, am a resident of the City of  
3 Pittsburgh and a regular user of  
4 PRODUCT's 87, 75, P1, 28X, and  
5 occasionally other routes.

6 I just have a few things  
7 to say because I had testified at the  
8 first hearing. And really, again, it's  
9 about the state's chronic underfunding  
10 of transit and its real consequences  
11 that people rely on these rides to get  
12 to and from their jobs, reach crucial  
13 medical care, make it to class, visit  
14 family and friends, and meet other  
15 basic needs, necessary part of life.  
16 Our bus system is also crucial to how a  
17 region operates and its competitiveness  
18 economically on the world stage.

19 Supporting robust transit is a core  
20 function of government, and it's time  
21 for elected officials in Harrisburg to  
22 step up and act so our residents and  
23 businesses aren't left on the side.

24 I do want to also  
25 acknowledge the leadership that

1 Representative Abney and Senator  
2 Williams have shown in introducing  
3 legislation. The board president  
4 LiBTAC, the joint column in the PG  
5 today about this issue. I really  
6 appreciate how leadership of the agency  
7 and those that are tied to Harrisburg  
8 are standing up for transit.

9 I want to share something  
10 that's a little more personal about  
11 this that you may hear a little bit  
12 more about at a different point. Right  
13 after Act 89 passed, I found myself in  
14 a situation where I could not drive for  
15 30 months. I was 40 at the time, mid-  
16 career. And you know, my job requires  
17 getting around a lot to go and see  
18 people.

19 PRT was literally a  
20 career saver during that time.  
21 Combined with using my bicycle, and it  
22 was very interesting. And I found  
23 myself in a place where the very thing  
24 that I've been advocating for avidly,  
25 tirelessly with others for two years,

1       which was funding for transit, was now  
2       supporting me at one of my most fragile  
3       times professionally, and frankly also  
4       personally.   What's that?   Okay.

5               I know what this service  
6       can do because I've experienced it.   I  
7       was fortunate and privileged enough to  
8       know that I could find another way to  
9       get around and do the things I needed  
10      to do.   But there is no way I could  
11      have done it without it.   And I really  
12      am concerned that people who end up in  
13      situations like mine in the future  
14      won't have that opportunity without the  
15      service continuing.

16              So please Harrisburg,  
17      please step up, do your thing.   We can  
18      talk about improvements, innovations.  
19      Guess what?   Transit still costs money,  
20      and we need that money now.   Thank you  
21      very much.

22                      MR. GASIOR:

23                      Next on our list is Peggy  
24      Walsh.

25                      MS. WALSH:

1                   Okay.

2                   Hello.   Where is it  
3   located?   To my left, okay.   My name is  
4   Peggy, P-E-G-G-Y.   Walsh, W-A-L-S-H.   I  
5   live at 200 Homes Place, Apartment 3 in  
6   Pittsburgh, PA 15213.   A two bedroom  
7   ground floor apartment in a condominium  
8   complex of townhouses and garden  
9   apartments built in May 1988.

10                  The hope was to help  
11   improve the Oakland area with brand  
12   new, first time home buyers.   At that  
13   time, there was bus service only.   In  
14   the early '90s, the original proposal  
15   in ACCESS was limited by the original  
16   Americans with Disabilities Act.   If  
17   you had just three quarters of a mile  
18   --- if you were three quarters of a  
19   mile of a bus or T stop, you could get  
20   ACCESS.   Otherwise, no --- no dice.

21                  So many people took part  
22   in public hearings, protesting such  
23   limitations, that services remained  
24   generous and counter free.   Had that  
25   not happened, it would have cost lives

1 of people living outside the City of  
2 Pittsburgh, literally.

3 So here we are again with  
4 the same proposed cuts in bus and  
5 paratransit services. It is already  
6 known that if implemented, this will.  
7 This --- this will, let's see. I  
8 apologize. This will mean worse  
9 traffic and --- and parking tie ups  
10 that we already experience. It would  
11 immobilize transportation for anyone  
12 who doesn't drive a car. Again,  
13 literally.

14 Presently, I use ACCESS  
15 to go anywhere. Medical appointments,  
16 symphony and chamber music concerts,  
17 and social events that include a  
18 monthly church event from September  
19 through May each year. I belong to a  
20 group called BOLD, Blind Outdoor  
21 Leisure Development, a dues paid, all  
22 volunteer board organization enabling  
23 members to enjoy winter skiing, a  
24 summer rowing program, tandem biking,  
25 kayaking, and hikes. This March, we

1 had our 50th anniversary celebration.  
2 ACCESS brought several participants who  
3 would otherwise have had to miss the  
4 party.

5 In summary, as an ACCESS  
6 rider who doesn't have any alternative  
7 for transportation, I have one friend,  
8 no, up to maybe three friends who drive  
9 occasionally. I'm speaking in strong  
10 encouragement to continue the ACCESS  
11 service, and make it available  
12 universally throughout the county.  
13 Thanks very much for your respectful  
14 attention.

15 MR. GASIOR:

16 Thank you. Next on our  
17 list we have Angela Martinez. Angela  
18 Martinez.

19 MS. MARTINEZ:

20 Good afternoon. My name  
21 is Angela Martinez, A-N-G-E-L-A.  
22 Martinez, M-A-R-T-I-N-E-Z. I live in  
23 the City of Pittsburgh, and my zip code  
24 is 15212.

25 I am here today both in



1 my professional and personal capacity.  
2 So professionally, I am Assistant  
3 Director to the City's Department of  
4 Mobility and Infrastructure, here to  
5 speak on behalf of DOMI and the City of  
6 Pittsburgh.

7 At DOMI, we are investing  
8 in the infrastructure of the future.  
9 Safer streets, more efficient  
10 corridors, and building a multimodal  
11 network that serves everyone. PRT is a  
12 partner in every aspect of our work,  
13 from safer streets to equitable access  
14 to climate resilience and economic  
15 development. But we cannot deliver on  
16 this shared vision without a strong and  
17 predictable investment in transit.

18 PRT provides 37 million  
19 trips annually. Imagine our county if  
20 transit is cut by more than a third.  
21 That's up to 12 million trips currently  
22 taken by transit that will need to be  
23 accommodated in some other way. Most  
24 will move to cars, meaning more  
25 congestion and more wear and tear on

1       our streets. But worse will be the  
2       trips that don't happen. The missed  
3       work, school, or doctor's appointments  
4       by those that don't have other reliable  
5       options.

6                       One impact, which I think  
7       is not getting nearly enough attention,  
8       is the reliance of middle and high  
9       school aged students who are not bused  
10      by Pittsburgh Public Schools. Many  
11      rely on PRT transit passes to get to  
12      school and activities. The stats for  
13      students using PRT provided passes are  
14      impressive. At SciTech, 90 percent of  
15      students use public transit. At Obama  
16      Academy, 56 percent, and at Allderdice,  
17      24.

18                      We are here today, not  
19      simply as advocates for infrastructure,  
20      but as stewards of the comprehensive  
21      transportation system needed to uphold  
22      life, livelihood, and opportunity in  
23      Allegheny County. A functional city of  
24      our size demands robust public transit  
25      that exceeds beyond our municipal

1        borders. Every day, hundreds of  
2        thousands of people and goods move  
3        through our city.

4                    Whether or not you ride  
5        transit, you benefit from it. Fewer  
6        cars on the road, less congestion,  
7        cleaner air, and a workforce that can  
8        access jobs.

9                    Cuts are not the answer.  
10       PRT has already tightened its belt. It  
11       has cut service in the past, and  
12       continues to pursue efficiency. The  
13       agency's bus line redesign proposes to  
14       rebalance routes, improve access, and  
15       deliver better service without  
16       increasing operating costs beyond  
17       current funding levels. But even this  
18       careful, cost neutral plan would be  
19       gutted by further cuts necessitated by  
20       the sunset in state funding.

21                   The impending expiration  
22       of Act 89 is not the expiration of a  
23       subsidy. It is an essential piece of  
24       legislation that directs state funds to  
25       an essential public good. While

1 Governor Shapiro's proposal to increase  
2 transit share of the state sales and  
3 use tax is a step in the right  
4 direction, it does not cover the full  
5 balance of what is needed to sustain  
6 the system. If we want a city and  
7 region that works for everyone, we need  
8 to treat public transit as the  
9 essential service it is and fund it.

10 We appreciate and  
11 acknowledge the work of our colleagues  
12 at PRT and ACCESS, and we are pleased  
13 to stand beside them and members of the  
14 public in support of Commonwealth  
15 action that secures long term,  
16 sustainable funding for transit and  
17 paratransit, not just to keep buses  
18 moving, but to keep our communities  
19 connected and futures on track. Thank  
20 you.

21 MR. GASIOR:

22 Next on our list we have  
23 Pete Bianco.

24 MS. KELLEMAN:

25 And as Mr. Bianco's

1 coming up, just for the record, we do  
2 ask that you state your name. You do  
3 not have to give us your --- we would  
4 rather not get your full address, but  
5 your name is good. Thank you.

6 MR. GASIOR:

7 Yep.

8 MR. BIANCO:

9 Good afternoon. My name  
10 is Pete Bianco. I'm a lifelong  
11 resident of Pittsburgh and the  
12 surrounding areas. I grew up here as a  
13 child. I spent a lot of time on the T,  
14 a lot of nostalgic memories connected  
15 to that.

16 In my time at the  
17 University of Pittsburgh, where I met  
18 my wife, I relied almost entirely on  
19 public transportation to live within  
20 the city, to see my girlfriend, who  
21 would actually become the mother of our  
22 seven children. Now, we have a lot of  
23 wonderful opportunity and memories,  
24 riding the T and moving throughout the  
25 city, a city that is not nearly as

1 congested as it would be without its  
2 excellent public transportation.

3 At the University of  
4 Pittsburgh, I had the opportunity to  
5 earn a master's degree in  
6 sustainability and construction  
7 management. And I can tell you from a  
8 sustainability perspective, I love the  
9 idea of keeping some cars off the road.  
10 I will tell you, as the president of  
11 the Building Division at Mosites  
12 Construction Company, it's a really  
13 important resource for a lot of our  
14 crew. Especially with the large amount  
15 of work that continues to come into the  
16 City of Pittsburgh, and the large  
17 amount of infrastructure that needs to  
18 support it. The last thing we need to  
19 be doing is limiting transportation  
20 options for our craft personnel.

21 Specifically, I'd like to  
22 mention our relationship with PRT. In  
23 preparation for my comments today, I  
24 pulled the projects that we've done  
25 over the last ten years, just picking a

1 sample set, and those projects are  
2 really important. They're important  
3 because they stimulate the local  
4 economy, but more importantly, they're  
5 critical to the infrastructure of the  
6 public transit system. We do things  
7 like tunnels, bridges, electrical  
8 upgrades, escalator upgrades, paint  
9 booth upgrades, things that are all  
10 directly driven back to the user  
11 experience and the benefits seen by the  
12 city and the taxpayers of both the  
13 state and --- and the city.

14                   You know, I apologize.  
15 I'm not the best public speaker, but I  
16 do want to say from my perspective as a  
17 resident of Pittsburgh and an active,  
18 heartfelt member of the Pittsburgh  
19 business community, representing an  
20 organization that's been here for over  
21 65 years, I can't speak highly enough  
22 of the relationship between PRT and the  
23 city, the business community, and the  
24 residents. And I urge you to continue  
25 supporting it. Thank you.

1                   MR. GASIOR:

2                   Thank you.   Next on our  
3                   list, we have Christine Amy Habas.   As  
4                   a reminder, you have three minutes for  
5                   public comment.   To help our Court  
6                   Reporter, please state your full name  
7                   again, and spell it slowly and clearly  
8                   before you begin speaking.   Thank you.

9                   MS. HABAS:

10                  Hello.   My name is  
11                  Christine, C-H-R-I-S-T-I-N-E.   Amy, A-  
12                  M-Y.   Habas, H-A-B-A-S.   And I live in  
13                  Mount Lebanon.

14                  I would not be able to  
15                  function if the bus cancellations  
16                  happened.   For the past 40 years since  
17                  I moved to Pittsburgh, I depended on  
18                  the bus.   At first, I took the bus to  
19                  go to classes.   I have health problems,  
20                  and I've needed to take the bus to  
21                  appointments.   I have family members in  
22                  town who have helped with  
23                  transportation, but being able to  
24                  navigate Pittsburgh on a bus has helped  
25                  me to be independent.



1                   Although some of my  
2                   medications and groceries are  
3                   delivered, I take the bus for extras.  
4                   I've had issues with my phone, and use  
5                   the bus to address them. On nice days,  
6                   I can walk to church, but when the  
7                   weather is bad and during the winter, I  
8                   have to take the bus.

9                   My boyfriend lives in  
10                  Wilkinsburg, one of my sisters lives in  
11                  Squirrel Hill, and the other sister  
12                  lives in the Strip District. I rely on  
13                  the bus when we get together.

14                 The bus has been my mode  
15                 of transportation when I've met with  
16                 friends. Taking the bus has helped me  
17                 to stay healthy. The bus  
18                 discontinuations would prevent me from  
19                 getting out of my apartment. Thank  
20                 you.

21                   MR. GASIOR:

22                   Thank you. Next on our  
23                   list we have Sam Spear.

24                   MR. SPEAR:

25                   Thank you. My name is

1 Sam Spear, S-A-M S-P-E-A-R. I live in  
2 Ross Township.

3 I'm an engineer,  
4 specifically a bridge engineer. I work  
5 for GAI Consultants. I've worked on  
6 Port Authority projects for 25 years.  
7 And I could talk about economic impacts  
8 in the engineering and construction  
9 industries. I think just heard from  
10 Ms. Habas a moment ago about that. I  
11 thought I might talk a little bit about  
12 some of the cultural and personal  
13 improvements impacts of public transit  
14 in my family's life.

15 I have a sister-in-law  
16 who has some significant disabilities,  
17 including seizures, and she's unable to  
18 drive. About 25 years ago, she married  
19 a gentleman who has some developmental  
20 and cognitive difficulties. And today,  
21 they live independently. Bob's worked  
22 for 25 years in Monroeville. They live  
23 in Penn Avenue, and on boulevard  
24 corridors in the city. And Bob and  
25 Christie's ability to work as a married

1 couple and support themselves through  
2 employment is solely attributable to  
3 the availability of public transit.  
4 And so, adds to their dignity of life,  
5 it adds to their joy, gives them the  
6 ability to go out for a date, get  
7 dinner somewhere together, and it's a  
8 lovely addition to their family.

9 And you know, rates we  
10 can handle if there are rate increases.  
11 But loss of service is really a  
12 significant issue because it allows  
13 them, again, to live independently in  
14 the city, and has for 25 years, which  
15 has been a profound benefit to my  
16 family.

17 So that's what I wanted  
18 to share with you today. Thank you.

19 MR. GASIOR:

20 Next on our list, we have  
21 Jeffrey Denger-Huff. As a reminder,  
22 you have three minutes for your public  
23 comment. To help our Court Reporter,  
24 please state your full name again, and  
25 spell it slowly and clearly before you

1       begin speaking.

2                   MR. HUFF:

3               Hello. Thank you for the  
4       opportunity to speak. My name is  
5       Jeffrey Huff, J-E-F-F-R-E-Y H-U-F-F.  
6       And I --- I'm from Brookline, 15226,  
7       but I actually just moved to Pittsburgh  
8       four weeks ago for an opportunity to  
9       move up in the company that I work for.

10              I came here today to  
11      start --- to start building a life and  
12      just to explore the new --- explore a  
13      new environment to me. But  
14      unfortunately, I am already  
15      reconsidering that decision. I don't  
16      own a car. I rely on public  
17      transportation every single day to get  
18      to work, to buy groceries, to get to my  
19      appointments, and to simply live.  
20      These proposed cuts are not just  
21      inconvenient, they're incredibly  
22      destabilizing. They are making me  
23      seriously consider moving back to  
24      Philadelphia, where, despite its own  
25      very real challenges, public transit

1 remains far more reliable and  
2 accessible.

3 Pittsburgh is a unique  
4 city, as I'm learning more and more  
5 every day. The hills, the tunnels, and  
6 the rivers, though incredibly  
7 beautiful, this geography makes it  
8 nearly impossible to walk or bike to  
9 many places. Reliable transit ---  
10 transit isn't just a nice option here,  
11 it's a complete necessity. And cutting  
12 35 percent of service, eliminating late  
13 night options, and increasing fares,  
14 that doesn't just hurt convenience.  
15 That doesn't just hurt convenience. It  
16 threatens livelihoods.

17 Public transit is --- is  
18 a public good. It connects people to  
19 jobs, health care, schools, and their  
20 communities. Cutting it sends a clear  
21 message that --- that we do not  
22 prioritize working class people, lower  
23 income residents, or marginalized  
24 communities. I urge our state  
25 lawmakers, fund this system. Invest in

1       it.    Because without it, we --- without  
2       you, you are not just cutting groups.  
3       You are cutting off opportunity,  
4       dignity, and the future of thousands of  
5       people.   Thanks so much.

6                   MR. GASIOR:

7                   Thank you.   Next on our  
8       list is Andrew Hussein.

9                   MR. HUSSEIN:

10                  Andrew, A-N-D-R-E-W.  
11       Hussein, H-U-S-S-E-I-N.   No relation to  
12       the historically bad one.

13                  So last time I spoke  
14       here, I was previously vice president  
15       of the Allegheny County Transit  
16       Council.   Since then, our president has  
17       stepped down, so I've been promoted to  
18       the president role of the Allegheny  
19       County Transit Council.   And so, this  
20       is first an official statement from the  
21       Transit Council, which is that the  
22       Council is very alarmed, concerned, and  
23       dismayed at the seriousness and the  
24       extent of what's being proposed.

25                  These cuts, if they have

1 to happen, to the worst extent, would  
2 be draconian, catastrophic,  
3 cataclysmic. I could go on with  
4 descriptors, but I won't. And it would  
5 be ridiculous.

6 Now on my own statement  
7 too, I would like to say especially,  
8 and I hope Harrisburg and people who  
9 need to hear this, hear this. We have  
10 a CEO who, unfortunately, sometimes  
11 gets more flack than she should be  
12 getting. It's true. I'm sorry if you  
13 don't like my opinion, but the reality  
14 is I've seen the CEO have and explained  
15 many times on the record that she has  
16 hopes, dreams, and visions for the  
17 Authority, and the service here in the  
18 region.

19 That cannot happen,  
20 including those improvements and the  
21 wonderful vision of things like 24 hour  
22 service, if the government, the  
23 Harrisburg and whoever else, does not  
24 do their part and fund it. We can have  
25 better transit in Pittsburgh and

1       beyond, but Harrisburg really and truly  
2       needs to hear us. And also Port  
3       Authority, and I know they've been  
4       doing their part. Port Authority needs  
5       to continue to be doing their part and  
6       pound the pavement because we do have a  
7       CEO and some people in this company  
8       right now who will go to bat for us,  
9       and definitely leagues better than some  
10      people might recall, this is not our  
11      first rodeo dealing with these kind of  
12      cuts.

13                       We've literally had CEOs  
14      have the audacity to go on the record  
15      and say things like, the public may as  
16      well invest in a good pair of walking  
17      shoes. That's how little they cared.  
18      Whereas the current management and  
19      leadership does have people who care,  
20      and have a vision. The state needs to  
21      allow that vision to take shape.

22                       MR. GASIOR:

23                       Thank you. At this time,  
24      we have no other scheduled speakers.

25                       MS. KELLEMAN:



1                   Okay.

2                   At this point, we will  
3                   take a ten minute break, and we will  
4                   join --- a 12 minute break to be round  
5                   on the clock. We'll be back at 4:10.  
6                   Thank you.

7                                 ---

8                   (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS TAKEN  
9                   DURING THE PROCEEDING.)

10                                ---

11                   MS. KELLEMAN:

12                   Okay.

13                   It is 4:12, and we are  
14                   going to reconvene our public hearing.

15                   MR. GASIOR:

16                   Next on our list is  
17                   Christine Hunsinger. As a reminder,  
18                   you have three minutes for your public  
19                   comment. To help our Court Reporter,  
20                   please state your full name, and spell  
21                   it slowly and clearly before you begin  
22                   speaking.

23                   MS. HUNSINGER:

24                   And that's a microphone.

25                   Okay. All right.

1                   My name is Christine  
2     Hunsinger, C-H-R-I-S-T-I-N-E.     Last  
3     name Hunsinger, H-U-N-S-I-N-G-E-R.

4                   Now, I'm not speaking  
5     just as me, an older blind woman who  
6     can't drive, won't ever drive, and  
7     might never see an autonomous vehicle.  
8     And I'm not even speaking as Christine  
9     Hunsinger, President of Golden Triangle  
10    Council of the Blind. I am speaking as  
11    someone who lives in Allegheny County  
12    and values public transportation and  
13    paratransit, and feels that it is not  
14    only something that we should have, but  
15    something that we must have because the  
16    people in private industry have not  
17    been able to actually provide such  
18    services for anybody.

19                  Not only does this  
20    transportation help people who are  
21    disabled and old and any of those kind  
22    of characteristics, but it also helps  
23    people who live in situations where  
24    having an automobile would cost them  
25    more than actually sometimes food or

1       housing. And it would take so much  
2       away from what they have available to  
3       them.

4                       It will --- if these cuts  
5       occur, they will limit people's ability  
6       to be employed. They will limit our  
7       ability to attract new businesses.  
8       They will limit our ability to --- I'm  
9       sorry. They will limit our ability to  
10      have our cities grow.

11                      We all know that  
12      compromise is necessary. Some other  
13      programs may have to get the squeeze a  
14      little bit so the transportation can  
15      have what it needs. But remember, when  
16      you lose a public transit or  
17      paratransit rider, it's really hard to  
18      get that person back. And you also  
19      have to remember that one of the things  
20      that they hope to pay for this with is  
21      the skill games, and that's so sad  
22      because that money is dream money that  
23      people put in, hoping that they'll get  
24      lucky. And it's kind of like the  
25      lottery, but nevertheless, it does seem

1 to put the burden on the poor people  
2 who wish they could figure out a way to  
3 make money. We also have to think  
4 about the climate issues involved.

5 And so, I say please pass  
6 this transit bill. Get some money for  
7 public transportation for the whole  
8 state. Thank you.

9 MS. KELLEMAN:

10 Thank you.

11 MR. GASIOR:

12 Next up we have Sean  
13 Luther.

14 MR. LUTHER:

15 Good afternoon, everyone.  
16 My name's Sean Luther, S-E-A-N L-U-T-H-  
17 E-R. I'm a resident of the Uptown  
18 neighborhood in the City of Pittsburgh,  
19 15219. I'm also the president and CEO  
20 of the InnovatePGH Partnership, which  
21 is based in Oakland, 15213.

22 Many of today's speakers,  
23 and throughout the week, have  
24 rightfully focused on the human impacts  
25 of transit cuts and the deep

1 consequences to our region's quality of  
2 life. I'd like to add today a new  
3 dimension focused on transit's impacts  
4 on economic and neighborhood  
5 development as well.

6 My role at InnovatePGH  
7 provides a unique opportunity to engage  
8 with growth stage companies. These are  
9 typically \$100 million valuation,  
10 generally have more than 50 employees.  
11 These are the next generation of  
12 corporate leaders for Southwestern  
13 Pennsylvania.

14 What we hear from these  
15 exciting companies is that they want to  
16 stay and grow in Pittsburgh. To do so,  
17 they need to be able to hire and retain  
18 employees who are also in hot demand at  
19 our rival innovation hubs across the  
20 country. Transit, more of it, not  
21 less, is at the top of the list of our  
22 tech workers are looking for. In  
23 addition to bike infrastructure, good  
24 sidewalks, and the ability to patronize  
25 local businesses.

1                   To grow our technology  
2           economy, Pittsburgh needs a strong and  
3           dedicated funding strategy for transit,  
4           as much as we need more local venture  
5           capital investments. Without transit,  
6           we will lose startups. We will lose  
7           knowledge economy workers, and we will  
8           use --- lose a unique growth driver for  
9           our region's economy.

10                   In Innovate's role  
11           managing the Pittsburgh Innovation  
12           District in our Oakland neighborhood,  
13           we also have a powerful view of the  
14           value of transit to our youngest  
15           startups, translated technologists, and  
16           Gen Z founders. Startups in Oakland  
17           are there explicitly because of the  
18           robust access to transit. Many of  
19           these founders do not have and do not  
20           want a car. They are hiring interns,  
21           many of whom are not native to  
22           Pittsburgh, and only use transit to  
23           move around our city.

24                   In Oakland, we're also  
25           counting down the days until the

1 opening of the university line. PRT's  
2 physical infrastructure investment will  
3 create a linkage between Oakland, the  
4 heart of our R&D community, and the  
5 tech oriented developments in downtown,  
6 Bakery Square, Rockwell Park, and  
7 elsewhere. University line will also  
8 reduce barriers for residents in our  
9 eastern communities to access and  
10 growing job opportunities in Oakland.  
11 But without stable funding for transit  
12 operations, the physical package cannot  
13 accomplish its goals.

14 Finally, as a resident of  
15 Uptown, and an urban planning nerd, I  
16 have seen firsthand the connection  
17 between our neighborhood's community  
18 development goals and reliable transit  
19 service. Uptown was the first city  
20 neighborhood to eliminate parking  
21 minimums and replace them with parking  
22 maximums. Transit availability in  
23 Uptown is more than transportation. It  
24 helps us prioritize houses over parking  
25 spaces.

1 Transit is a  
2 differentiator for Pittsburgh in a  
3 hyper competitive innovation economy.  
4 It powers our thoughtful community  
5 development goals, and dedicated  
6 funding is critical to achieving our  
7 collective economic development goals  
8 as a region. Thank you very much.

9 MS. KELLEMAN:

10 Thank you.

11 MR. GASIOR:

12 Thank you. Next up, we  
13 have Francis Ulrich. As a reminder,  
14 you have three minutes for your public  
15 comment. To help our Court Reporter,  
16 please state your full name again, and  
17 spell it slowly and clearly before you  
18 begin speaking.

19 MR. ULRICH:

20 I'm Francis --- is this  
21 on? No. Hello? No. All right, I'll  
22 try to stand up there.

23 MR. GASIOR:

24 There you go.

25 MS. KELLEMAN:



1                   You're good, we can hear  
2                   you.    You just had to threaten it.

3                   MR. ULRICH:

4                   My name's Francis Ulrich,  
5                   F-R-A-N-C-I-S U-L-R-I-C-H.   And tell me  
6                   when to go.

7                   MS. KELLEMAN:

8                   Whenever you want.

9                   MR. ULRICH:

10                  Go?    I was born and  
11                  raised in Sheraden, now live in the  
12                  family home.   I serve on the Board of  
13                  Directors of the Sheraden Community  
14                  Council.   I'm a member and Board member  
15                  elect of the Sheraden Kiwanis Club, and  
16                  I'm a member of Age Friendly Pittsburgh  
17                  Community Panel.   I speak from all of  
18                  them, getting resources.

19                  Let's get this out of the  
20                  way.    That we have to be here as bad.  
21                  Not necessarily your fault, but I'm  
22                  sure the Transit Authority finds the  
23                  budget shortfall challenging.   But it's  
24                  not about bus routes and buses.   For  
25                  legacy urban neighborhoods like

1        Sheraden, these proposed cuts would  
2        negatively impact the quality of life  
3        of our residents and the future  
4        development of our community.

5                        We were founded well over  
6        a century ago when we developed and  
7        thrived. It was the passenger rail  
8        line to Sheraden and the streetcar  
9        system itself developed over a century  
10       ago that connected us with the City of  
11       Pittsburgh and its surrounding  
12       neighbors. We were once self-  
13       sufficient as to day-to-day needs. But  
14       as you know, many neighborhoods like  
15       this are now without a food store,  
16       pharmacy, bank, post office, hardware  
17       store, on and on and on.

18                      The important thing to  
19        note is that this is not all because of  
20        hard times. It's also because of  
21        changing times. Specifically, the  
22        centralization of almost everything.  
23        Please note, as it relates to jobs,  
24        this centralized world no longer  
25        operates 9:00 to 5:00, Monday through

1 Friday. It's often seven days a week,  
2 24/7.

3 In legacy neighborhoods  
4 like Sheraden, residents must now  
5 travel in order to get to locations to  
6 meet their everyday needs. This isn't  
7 just about food stores. It includes,  
8 for example, access to places of  
9 worship, health care, educational and  
10 job opportunities, recreational  
11 opportunities, youth and after school  
12 programs, and civic engagement.

13 For those of us who have  
14 access to a car or don't have access to  
15 a car, or for those in need of  
16 assistance with mobility, access to  
17 public transportation is nothing less  
18 than a survival issue.

19 Please note this. That  
20 in our neighborhood, even homeowners in  
21 our community can find only a car a  
22 luxury, and often even those who have a  
23 car doesn't provide adequate  
24 transportation to the many who might be  
25 working in that household. This ---

1       this in and of itself illustrates the  
2       disproportionate, negative impact of  
3       eliminating public transportation will  
4       have on lower income families. So we  
5       want to preserve what we have and  
6       establish our neighborhood.

7               I'll just jump to the  
8       summary. Cutting the bus routes and  
9       availability of ACCESS services for  
10      communities like Sheraden isn't just a  
11      budget decision. It's a decision about  
12      who, whether younger or older, and  
13      about --- it's about who can meet their  
14      day-to-day needs. It's about who has  
15      access to opportunity and about who  
16      gets to fully participate in the life  
17      of the city. And I do appreciate your  
18      --- the opportunity to speak to you.

19               MS. KELLEMAN:

20               Thank you.

21               MR. GASIOR:

22               Next on our list is Grant  
23      Thomas.

24               MR. THOMAS:

25               Hello. My name is Grant

1 Thomas, G-R-A-N-T T-H-O-M-A-S. I am in  
2 Bridgeville, and I am here as an  
3 employee of a provider for disability  
4 supports.

5 My agency, we support  
6 individuals with developmental  
7 disabilities, primarily individual with  
8 autism and intellectual disabilities,  
9 but other needs as well. And we like  
10 to say across the lifespan. We have  
11 been working with clients for a while  
12 now, and for the last year, I've been  
13 trying to ask my clients and other such  
14 providers what some of the biggest  
15 issues we see are. What are the things  
16 that we can help with the most? And  
17 across the board it's transportation.  
18 Across the board, my clients can't get  
19 to where they need to go to live. To  
20 work, and to be a part of our community  
21 like we all should be able to do with  
22 our lives.

23 In Pittsburgh right now,  
24 you basically have to drive around.  
25 And I can assure you, us providers, we

1 do that. We provide transportation for  
2 our participants. That's what we call  
3 them, participants, to be able to be a  
4 part of their community. And yet, it's  
5 still the biggest ticket need.

6 Many of my participants  
7 cannot drive. Few of them can, so  
8 that's not their need. For those who  
9 can't drive, most of them want to work,  
10 but already struggle now to get to  
11 work, and to get back. Those who,  
12 regardless of whether they can or  
13 cannot work, still need to get  
14 groceries. Still need to be a part of  
15 the community, to build something  
16 better in Pittsburgh. Right now, it's  
17 between us providers, and the current  
18 public transportation.

19 We also have participants  
20 who can't even get to current bus  
21 stops. There are a few who come to  
22 mind who we've had to work with them on  
23 the options of, do we take you to the  
24 bus stop or do you pay the costly cost  
25 of, like, Uber just to get to a bus

1 stop? Because that walk is too much.  
2 Yes, ACCESS exists, but this proposal  
3 is to limit it and reduce where it even  
4 goes to. And I've heard complaints  
5 about the ability of these participants  
6 to use ACCESS.

7 I have also not been able  
8 to see any kind of new map proposed.  
9 We have people who rely on us to help  
10 them plan out their lives and figure  
11 out how to live. I didn't know that  
12 this speaking thing existed until  
13 yesterday. So I can't expect my  
14 coworkers, other providers to be able  
15 to support all the people we do with  
16 knowing how to get out of their homes.

17 In my work, we already  
18 have a transportation crisis. I would  
19 beg whoever I need to beg that we not  
20 make it worse. What we need right now  
21 is better options, not less options, or  
22 else we're going to see a lot more  
23 people not working in a state that is  
24 employment first focused. That  
25 problem's only going to get worse.

1       Thank you.

2                   MS. KELLEMAN:

3                   Thank you.

4                   MR. GASIOR:

5                   Thank you.    Our next  
6 speaker, Isabelle Stanley.

7                   MS. STANLEY:

8                   Hi, my name is Isabelle  
9 Stanley, I-S-A-B-E-L-L-E S-T-A-N-L-E-Y.

10                   But I'm not here to talk  
11 to you about myself. I'm here to talk  
12 to you about my grandmother, who's  
13 sitting there behind me. She lives in  
14 Wilkinsburg, and she's lucky enough to  
15 have a bus stop that's, like, a two  
16 minute walk from her house. But she  
17 relies on it for everything. She's 90  
18 years old, she can't drive, she's going  
19 blind. She relies on the bus to get to  
20 her cancer appointments, to get to the  
21 eye doctors, to go to the grocery  
22 store, and the pharmacy. These are  
23 critical needs.

24                   And it's not just her.  
25 It's people her age across western



1       Pennsylvania who rely on buses ---  
2       specifically in Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh  
3       Regional Transit, to get to all of  
4       these important things. Without the  
5       bus system, without these things, she  
6       would not be able to survive. She  
7       would not be able to function. She  
8       relies on the bus to get everywhere.

9               And of course, she has  
10       family and they can drive her in some  
11       cases, but she really can't do  
12       anything, get anywhere. She relies on  
13       it. There's no grocery store nearby  
14       where she lives. There's no pharmacy.  
15       There's nowhere for her to get her food  
16       or her medical care. And she relies on  
17       that.

18              She goes to the Hillman  
19       Cancer Center once a week, every week  
20       for treatments and checkups. And  
21       without the buses, she can't get there.  
22       She goes into Oakland for her  
23       prescriptions. She wouldn't be able to  
24       get there without the bus. She goes  
25       into Swissvale and into Oakland for her

1 food, for Giant Eagle. She would not  
2 be able to walk there without the  
3 buses.

4 And she would not be able  
5 to do any of the things that she enjoys  
6 without the buses. She would not be  
7 able to get downtown to listen to the  
8 symphony or to go to the churches that  
9 she goes for music services. She would  
10 not be able to go anywhere. She would  
11 be trapped in her house.

12 So I'm just saying, I'm  
13 asking everybody to consider that when  
14 you cut the funding for things that are  
15 so important, that you're hurting  
16 people like her. You're hurting people  
17 who cannot get to work, you're hurting  
18 people who cannot get to their medical  
19 care. You're hurting people who cannot  
20 get to the things that they enjoy, to  
21 get to their food, to get to their  
22 prescriptions.

23 It's incredibly  
24 important, and it's vital to  
25 Pittsburgh, vital to the community,

1       that people are able to do these  
2       things. And it's not just people like  
3       my grandmother. It's the college  
4       student in Oakland who doesn't have a  
5       car, can't afford one, and can't get  
6       anywhere without it. It's the single  
7       mother who can't afford a car, and  
8       needs to get to work to feed her kids.  
9       It's people like me who just enjoy  
10      spending time with their grandmother,  
11      and can't do that without the buses.

12                So, I thank you all for  
13      your time and your consideration in  
14      these things. And thank you.

15                MS. KELLEMAN:

16                I always get this  
17      backwards. Darcy, can we make sure Ms.  
18      Stanley gets the information of how to  
19      reach out to elected officials, et  
20      cetera? They need to hear from you and  
21      your grandmother.

22                MS. STANLEY:

23                Thank you.

24                MS. KELLEMAN:

25                Thank you.

1                   MS. STANLEY:

2                   Thank you, I appreciate  
3                   it.

4                   MR. GASIOR:

5                   Next on our list is  
6                   Michael Shall.

7                   MR. SHALL:

8                   Good afternoon. My name  
9                   is Michael Shall. I am visually  
10                  impaired, and I have someone who's  
11                  going to read my speech that I've  
12                  written on behalf of our community and  
13                  our, Pittsburgh.

14                  PUBLIC SPEAKER:

15                  Good evening. My name is  
16                  Michael Shall. I am here tonight to  
17                  discuss PRT's proposed elimination of  
18                  the P69 route from Trafford to  
19                  Pittsburgh. These changes would have a  
20                  catastrophic effect on our communities  
21                  and my full time employment in the  
22                  city, since I have a visual impairment  
23                  terminal that does not allow me to  
24                  drive.

25                  The communities of East

1       Pittsburgh, Turtle Creek, Wilmerding,  
2       and Trafford will suffer economic  
3       hardship from the loss of this bus  
4       line. For these reasons, I believe  
5       that PRT should continue to operate the  
6       P69 rail. Discontinuance of this route  
7       will result in loss of my employment  
8       because I must use public  
9       transportation as I am legally blind.

10               I cannot adjust my  
11       transportation as I can only get to the  
12       bus stop by walking, and I am not  
13       allowed --- I am not alone. As other  
14       elderly, disabled, lower income  
15       households would be adversely affected  
16       as they do not have the ability to get  
17       to the new stops or use motor vehicles.  
18       The proposed changes to the route will  
19       force patrons to get the bus stop in  
20       North Versailles. Also, there is a  
21       strong probability that the bus would  
22       not hold all the riders, especially  
23       during peak commuter hours.

24               There would be also to  
25       --- be a change of buses at the

1 Wilkinsburg Station and Penn Station,  
2 which would aggravate the condition and  
3 cause added time to get to the city.  
4 This means the new route is not a  
5 direct route to the city. For most  
6 workers, these changes will add  
7 disproportionate amount of hours to  
8 their workday.

9 As we all know, these  
10 affected commuters in the City of  
11 Pittsburgh are going through economic  
12 hard times. The elimination of this  
13 Express Flyer will cause economic  
14 disaster not only to local communities,  
15 but also the city. The city will lose  
16 tax revenues from employees and  
17 occupational fees from the businesses.  
18 The ability for many to come to the  
19 events, shopping, and restaurants in  
20 the city will be demolished.

21 Local communities will  
22 also be impacted if their residents do  
23 not have disposable incomes to spend in  
24 these communities. But our vital  
25 solutions would be help retain

1       ridership and improve PRT's revenue  
2       stream.

3                       The PRT --- I'm sorry.  
4       The P69 should be retained as PRT has  
5       the ability to determine peak ridership  
6       and runs. I get on the bus at 5:45 in  
7       the morning, and it is packed. My  
8       return ride at 4:50 is also full. The  
9       P69 can extend the run to include  
10      Wilmerding and Haymaker Village,  
11      therefore eliminating the need for the  
12      69.

13                      The P69 should include  
14      the small section of Trafford that is  
15      currently serviced for its riders, and  
16      have physical conditions preventing  
17      them from getting to Haymaker Village.  
18      PRT should also look at how it can  
19      reduce the administrative staffs that  
20      have led to the large deficit. If it  
21      is necessary to raise the cost per  
22      ride, I am sure riders would prefer  
23      that to not having public  
24      transportation.

25                      I'm extremely grateful to

1 PRT and its riders who recognize my  
2 disability, and make sure that I am  
3 accommodated. I also want to thank the  
4 Department of Transit Amenities for  
5 their help they have given me. These  
6 changes, however, will result in my  
7 inability to get the bus. I am asking  
8 you to retain the P69 as its services is  
9 invaluable --- citizens of our  
10 communities. Thank you.

11 MR. GASIOR:

12 Thank you. Next on our  
13 list is Tom Sterbal. As a reminder,  
14 you have three minutes for your public  
15 comment. To help our Court Reporter,  
16 please state your full name again, and  
17 spell it slowly and clearly before you  
18 begin speaking. Thank you.

19 MR. STERBAL:

20 Can you hear me? Okay.

21 Hello, my name is Tom  
22 Sterbal, S-T-E-R-B-A-L, and I am a  
23 current resident of Bethel Park, 15102.

24 I'm here to speak about  
25 the proposed cuts to the Library Line.



1 I strongly believe that there should be  
2 no cuts without doing the best use  
3 study from the next transit plan.  
4 Having to walk over a mile to the  
5 closest light rail stop on the village  
6 line through a neighborhood where  
7 sidewalks are practically non-existent  
8 would make walking to the T more  
9 impossible than it already is at an  
10 unacceptable and unsafe walk for  
11 everyone in my neighborhood, especially  
12 at night and in the winter time.

13 Since moving to where I  
14 live a few years ago, I've been  
15 concerned about the potential shutdown  
16 of this line. I honestly have thought  
17 about moving every year because of that  
18 uncertainty. One of the main reasons I  
19 chose this location was at least I  
20 would still be on the T line. There  
21 are many advantages to living where I  
22 do, and I don't to want the shutdown of  
23 transit service entirely to be the  
24 reason for having to move. I don't  
25 want to take on added expenses using

1       rideshare services on an everyday basis  
2       or feet --- or feel pressured to learn  
3       how to drive.

4                       With that in mind, I am  
5       aware that the conditions of the  
6       Library Line are poor, given that there  
7       are only single car trains running on  
8       those tracks. As an alternative, I do  
9       believe a bus running along the Library  
10      Line at this point, even permanently,  
11      could be a good alternative, even  
12      though I've always enjoyed riding the  
13      T.

14                     Buses could more flexibly  
15      get to destinations like the Bethel  
16      Park Shopping Center, and other  
17      shopping, medical facilities, and  
18      residencies --- residences better than  
19      what the T can --- currently can get  
20      to. Especially given that certain non-  
21      ADA stops on the Library Line were cut  
22      in 2012.

23                     While Mid Mon Valley's  
24      Commuter A bus serves Route 88 frequent  
25      --- its frequency is only 12 inbound

1 and outbound trips on weekdays, and  
2 even less on --- than that on weekends.  
3 And it is not enough to fill eliminated  
4 service. I believe having a bus to  
5 serve the Library Line is better than  
6 cutting off service entirely, which is  
7 what is being proposed.

8 Additionally, I don't  
9 support ending the Red Line at  
10 Overbrook Junction either. Having to  
11 transfer at Overbrook Junction and  
12 connect at Willow isn't as easy as it  
13 looks, and it makes it harder for  
14 Beechview Line residents to get to  
15 stops between Overbrook Junction and  
16 South Hills Village and Library. As a  
17 compromise, if we can't stop all  
18 service cuts and fare increases, I  
19 would support raising the fare from  
20 \$2.75 to \$3, raising the pass prices,  
21 and keeping the three hour unlimited  
22 transfer.

23 So I believe even if all  
24 of the funding does not come through,  
25 fares could go up to at least \$3.

1       Thank you.

2                   MR. GASIOR:

3                   Okay.

4                   Next on our list, we have  
5 James Santelli.

6                   MR. SANTELLI:

7                   Hello, my name is James  
8 Santelli. James common spelling, S-A-  
9 N-T-E-L-L-I. I'm a resident of  
10 Aspinwall.

11                   Labor Day weekend 2021,  
12 my car's engine gave out, but I wasn't  
13 upset about it because it was a long  
14 time coming. I had a chance now to  
15 live car free, which I've now done for  
16 almost four years.

17                   I'm here today because I  
18 believe Pennsylvania should fully fund  
19 Pittsburgh Regional Transit, obviously,  
20 but I think it goes beyond that. I  
21 believe PA has the opportunity to be  
22 the best place in America to live, car  
23 optional. Affordably. Too many of  
24 America's cities with strong public  
25 transit are too expensive. New York,

1 Boston, San Francisco, D.C. On the  
2 flip side, too many of our affordable  
3 cities have inadequate transit.  
4 Detroit, Memphis, Buffalo.

5 But Pennsylvania has a  
6 chance to differentiate itself, to  
7 offer a lifestyle for people and  
8 opportunity for employers that no other  
9 state can offer in such large numbers.  
10 Car optional, affordably. We have a  
11 large city like Philadelphia, mid-sized  
12 city like Pittsburgh, small cities,  
13 Allentown, Erie, Lancaster, all of them  
14 in their heyday when streetcars  
15 outnumbered motor cars. It's in living  
16 memory for many of their residents.  
17 Cities built for transit, and they  
18 could be again because the bones are  
19 still there.

20 By making our cities car  
21 optional for more people, we can reduce  
22 many of the ill effects of modern  
23 America. Traffic deaths, obesity, air  
24 pollution, even things like the  
25 loneliness epidemic, health care costs,

1 and of course, greenhouse gases. And  
2 investing in transit will also mean  
3 saving money in the long run. Not just  
4 for people who would no longer have to  
5 spend an average of \$12,000 a year to  
6 buy and maintain their cars, but for  
7 local governments. Every person  
8 biking, walking, taking transit means  
9 money that we don't have to spend on  
10 expanding highways, on constantly  
11 repaving roads, or hiring more first  
12 responders to attend the car crashes.

13 By getting on a bus  
14 instead of into your own car, you cut  
15 your odds of being a traffic victim by  
16 90 percent. And we all benefit from  
17 that. In closing, let me say, let this  
18 be the moment that we realize the  
19 opportunity in front of us.

20 Pennsylvanians, young and old, as you  
21 have heard, need the ability to travel  
22 without driving. We can be a shining  
23 example for the other 49 states. Come  
24 here, live car optional, affordably for  
25 years to come. That's the vision, and

1 I think it's achievable here in PA.  
2 Thank you.

3 MR. GASIOR:

4 Next up, we have Mason  
5 Brooks. Next on our list is Mason  
6 Brooks. Next on our list we have Na-Ir  
7 Johnson. Okay. Next on our list, we  
8 have Mason Johnson. As a reminder, you  
9 have three minutes for your public  
10 comment. To help our Court Reporter,  
11 please state your full name.

12 MS. KELLEMAN:

13 Mason Brooks.

14 Correct?

15 MR. BROOKS:

16 Mason Brooks.

17 MR. GASIOR:

18 Mason Brooks.

19 MS. KELLEMAN:

20 We --- we combined them.  
21 We're clever like that. Mr. Brooks,  
22 come on up. We're ready for you.

23 MR. BROOKS:

24 This works? Okay.

25 Good afternoon, I

1       suppose.    I can move this, okay.

2                   MS. KELLEMAN:

3                   You're going to ---.

4                   MR. BROOKS:

5                   So if I'm not mistaken

6       ---.

7                   MS. KELLEMAN:

8                   You're going to spell  
9       your name for us though, first name and  
10      last name.

11                   MR. BROOKS:

12                   My first name and last  
13      name, spell it out for you?

14                   MS. KELLEMAN:

15                   Yes.    Yes, please.

16                   MR. BROOKS:

17                   M-A-S-O-N   B-R-O-O-K-S.

18      Okay.

19                   So, I had heard rumors  
20      about this earlier last year, around  
21      this time.    I live in --- I live in the  
22      community of Homestead/Lincoln Place,  
23      and that is on the outskirts of the  
24      City of Pittsburgh.    I don't know if  
25      you folks have been there, but I --- I



1       have for a number of years. It's not  
2       where I'm from, but it's a place that I  
3       can call home comfortably, and other  
4       people call home. And a part of being  
5       comfortable in one's home is  
6       accessibility. Accessibility to food,  
7       to shelter, to transportation.

8               I don't know a lot about  
9       all of the systems that are in place in  
10      our state and our Commonwealth. What I  
11      do understand is people, and people are  
12      willing to work for things as long as  
13      they are given them based off of what  
14      they put in. This is America, after  
15      all.

16             The people in my  
17      community, in this City of Pittsburgh,  
18      put in their due diligence. They clock  
19      in and clock out to work every day.  
20      And to say that their tax dollars are  
21      still going to be collected, but a key  
22      part of their livelihoods will be taken  
23      away? Personally, I can't go for that.  
24      No can do.

25             I also do, like I said

1 before, I do not understand all the  
2 systems, but I am willing to learn as  
3 much as I can so that my neighbors,  
4 along with myself, don't have to  
5 struggle to get from point A to point  
6 B. Yeah.

7 So, people struggling  
8 happens, but them struggling to live  
9 based off of the state spending or the  
10 Commonwealth spending is something that  
11 I will always be against. I don't know  
12 if you folks have ever taken the bus,  
13 but I do. I took the bus here, the 56,  
14 and I just read in this pamphlet that  
15 it's going to get major cuts. Won't go  
16 past 11:00 p.m. If you are unable to  
17 fix this, the people of the city will,  
18 as they've done for years.

19 MS. KELLEMAN:

20 Thank you, Mr. Brooks.  
21 And Darcy, I'm going to ask if we can  
22 connect Mr. Brooks with --- we want to  
23 get you the information so you can also  
24 speak to your legislators and share  
25 that same information with them. Thank

1       you.

2                   MR. GASIOR:

3               Next on our list, we have  
4       Na-Ir Johnson. As a reminder, you have  
5       three minutes for your public comment.  
6       To help our Court Reporter, please  
7       state your full name again, and spell  
8       it slowly and clearly before you begin  
9       speaking.

10                  MR. JOHNSON:

11               Yeah, just --- hello?  
12       Good. It's Na-Ir Johnson. So it's N-A  
13       dash I-R Johnson, and J-O, Johnson,  
14       okay?

15               So I just wanted to speak  
16       about not so much of an emotional  
17       aspect to it, but more so just worst  
18       case scenario, if nothing works out.  
19       We can't, you know, everything gets  
20       cut. I would just say one thing that  
21       caught me is, like, if we're going to  
22       increase the prices for the fare, I  
23       would request that we at least have  
24       more flexibility when it comes to how  
25       long we have. Because it's three hours

1 as of right now, for \$2.75. It's going  
2 to be \$3, allegedly.

3 Now it might be, you  
4 know, if you're paying \$3, if I was  
5 paying \$3, like well, why not just pay  
6 \$7? I might just pay for a monthly  
7 pass or a yearly pass even though it's  
8 too expensive for most of us. You  
9 know, surely for me too as well.  
10 Because getting around is very  
11 difficult, especially, you know, I live  
12 in Monroeville and I've recently moved.  
13 So just imagine, like, you know, it's,  
14 you know. I go to CCAC as well on top  
15 of that, too. So I go from the north,  
16 go downtown. I might miss my bus, you  
17 know, and not waiting around might get  
18 some food, you know. And that's  
19 obviously on me too as well. If I, you  
20 know, end up missing my next one.

21 But even so, it's ---  
22 that's still a short period of time  
23 when the buses come. So, you know, not  
24 so frequently as we would like to. So  
25 they come every, you know, every hour

1 or 40 minutes. Just imagine, you know,  
2 how that could really impact people,  
3 especially when I get off work and are  
4 waiting to get home. And downtown  
5 isn't exactly the safest place. I  
6 mean, we all know about that when it  
7 comes to a lot of issues that I might  
8 want to speak about here, but it's a  
9 different off topic.

10 But in general, I think  
11 we should get people to just get on the  
12 bus and get home safely. That's all we  
13 can do as of right now. And I think  
14 extending the hours that we can have  
15 too, on time, that would be a great  
16 solution. Even if we can't get to the  
17 bigger solution that I was talking  
18 about before, but I'd say extend the  
19 hours. How long? I would say at least  
20 six. If we're talking about at least  
21 for three hours to an extra six, so  
22 extra three hours. So three --- \$3,  
23 six hours. That's my proposal, at  
24 least for that one.

25 And the day pass, you

1 know, it's going to be. That's the  
2 worst case scenario for me, but. I  
3 just think that's just really an  
4 inconvenience that everyone that's  
5 being involved in that. So, it just  
6 leaves a lot on the table because if  
7 you can find, I guess this kind of  
8 prices for the bus pass, it's cool, you  
9 know. Someone under the table can  
10 maybe give you something cheaper. I  
11 found some for \$65, but a lot of people  
12 are paying \$97 because they find it,  
13 you know, it's more useful for them to  
14 pay that. Than, you know, doing so  
15 weekly.

16 So it's --- you're just  
17 seeing, okay, how can I bid for myself?  
18 You know, stay on a budget and also not  
19 get lost or have to pay. Now I'm  
20 paying \$6 because I missed my bus. So,  
21 I will say extend the hours, please and  
22 that will help us all, you know, and  
23 that's my proposal. That was it.

24 MR. GASIOR:

25 Next on our list we have

1 David Williamson.

2 MR. WILLIAMSON:

3 David Williamson, D-A-V-  
4 I-D W-I-L-L-I-A-M-S-O-N.

5 There's lots of different  
6 reasons --- lots of good reasons to not  
7 cut the buses at night. But chief one  
8 would be the deaths from drunk drivers  
9 and sleepy drivers. And as people try  
10 to walk places, there are places where  
11 there aren't sidewalks. So, it's a lot  
12 more dangerous at night than it is  
13 during the day, but danger's all the  
14 time.

15 And also in a more  
16 metaphorical sense, the death of the  
17 city's nightlife, with --- with all the  
18 pleasures and commerce that goes with  
19 that. And then you get more people  
20 driving, means more pollution, more  
21 traffic, and --- and all sorts of bills  
22 that come with that as well. And I try  
23 to bike and walk everywhere, but  
24 there's times and places where I can't  
25 do that. And there are people who

1 can't bike as well or walk as far as I  
2 can. And sometimes, especially late at  
3 night, it's important to get home  
4 quickly so you can get to sleep and so  
5 on, which is a lot better. The fact of  
6 not dying, staying alive, you know?  
7 Thank you.

8 MR. GASIOR:

9 Next on our list, we have  
10 David McKenna. As a reminder, you have  
11 three minutes for your public comment.  
12 To help our Court Reporter, please  
13 state your full name again, and spell  
14 it slowly and clearly before you begin  
15 speaking. Thank you.

16 MR. MCKENNA:

17 Good afternoon. My name  
18 is David McKenna, D-A-V-I-D M-C-K-E-N-  
19 N-A.

20 I've had several points  
21 that I'd like to posit for you. I  
22 don't have anything written out because  
23 I wrote it walking here from the second  
24 out of service bus sign on Fifth  
25 Avenue, trying to go to Squirrel Hill.



1 The first sign was Fifth and Wood out  
2 of service. I had walked from Benedum  
3 or whatever. I have a bad back, a  
4 lousy heart, and two permanent lung  
5 diagnoses. I'm a mess.

6 A disclaimer, if I may.  
7 I'm going to be sarcastic because it's  
8 my best skill, but it's not meant, it's  
9 not being dished out with anger. I  
10 wrote this walking from Fifth and  
11 Smithfield.

12 When I was about nine or  
13 ten, my motherly teacher take me on the  
14 trolley car from Mount Washington in  
15 --- in August to get shoes down here in  
16 town for school. So the conductor, as  
17 the title was then, had a black and  
18 blue cap. We'd come into the South  
19 Hills Junction when it was a wooden  
20 building, and the conductors would get  
21 out of their place and carry the coin  
22 box into the wooden building. One more  
23 detail then.

24 TIMEKEEPER:

25 One minute left.

1                   MR. MCKENNA:

2                   Thank you. I'll never  
3                   make it.

4                   I went across the Wood  
5                   Street Bridge by the Smithfield, and I  
6                   thought I was going to fall in. My  
7                   mother said, I've already explained to  
8                   you how I got here. Years ago, I was a  
9                   registered nurse at Mercy Hospital, and  
10                  the nurse shift doesn't end until you  
11                  document it. So you might get out of  
12                  there at 12:31 a.m., and the only way  
13                  home then if you don't have a car is a  
14                  list because no bus is going to come.

15                  I don't think I've been  
16                  as sarcastic as I planned to be, and  
17                  I'm glad of that. But I assure you, my  
18                  thoughts are offered with the best  
19                  intentions in mind. I know you want  
20                  input. I know this is the last  
21                  meeting. I just want you to know that  
22                  I gave up my plan for going to Squirrel  
23                  Hill and walked here. Thank you very  
24                  much.

25                  MR. GASIOR:

1                   Next on our list we have  
2           Emily Potoczny.

3                   MS. POTOCHNY:

4                   Thank you Emily Potoczny,  
5           E-M-I-L-Y P-O-T-O-C-Z-N-Y. I'm a  
6           resident of Millvale, 15209.

7                   And yeah, I just want to  
8           say first, thank you so much for  
9           holding these hearings and also thank  
10          you as a resident of Millvale for  
11          listening to us so much for the last  
12          couple of years. It's really been a  
13          wonderful experience, being a part of  
14          the redesign process and, you know,  
15          knowing that we're heard, knowing that  
16          the residents of Millvale are heard.

17                  And that said, you know,  
18          with these cuts at risk, we --- we have  
19          a lot to lose. So our borough of 3,300  
20          residents has a quarter without cars.  
21          Can't fit any more cars Millvale anyway  
22          if we wanted to. And over a third of  
23          households have a member with a  
24          disability. And so, those two facts  
25          combined mean that our population in

1 Millville is really reliant on transit.  
2 The numbers might not show it right now  
3 on ridership because of limitations  
4 that we have of where the bus can come  
5 through town.

6 So I would just, you  
7 know, put that into considerations when  
8 considering any cuts that you might  
9 have to make in the future that  
10 hopefully we have more residents who  
11 are able to ride once that bus can go  
12 back through the center of town.

13 That said, I'm also an  
14 employee of the University of  
15 Pittsburgh, so part of two populations  
16 that are heavily reliant on your  
17 transit service. And, you know, we  
18 couldn't do everything that we set out  
19 to do without you. And so, you know,  
20 I'm very supportive of PBT's PA Transit  
21 for All plan. It's something that I've  
22 been pushing folks in my borough and on  
23 our campus to support. And, you know,  
24 I really hope that our legislators at  
25 the state are able to recognize that

1       this is a really important service, not  
2       only for folks here in the city and in  
3       the other city, but also throughout the  
4       state as well. So that's really all I  
5       wanted to share, and just say thank you  
6       for the service that you have provided.  
7       And hopefully that be able to continue  
8       providing in the future. So, thanks.

9                   MR. GASIOR:

10                  Next on our list is  
11       Arlene Meyers. As a reminder, you have  
12       three minutes for your public comment.  
13       To help the Court Reporter, please  
14       state your name, full name, and spell  
15       it slowly and clearly before you begin  
16       speaking. Thank you.

17                  MS. MEYERS:

18                  My name is Arlene Meyers,  
19       A-R-L-E-N-E M-E-Y-E-R-S.

20                  I am 86 years old. I go  
21       to work three times a week. I work  
22       western side at an outpatient facility,  
23       and it would be chaos. You know,  
24       people just wouldn't be able to get  
25       there. You know, now they give bus

1 tickets out of work. You know, so if  
2 they raised the prices, then they would  
3 compensate them so they could get a  
4 ride. But if they don't have any buses  
5 at all, then I don't know what these  
6 people would do. You know, they would  
7 have to live in assisted living or in a  
8 permanent residence. And I just don't  
9 know how people can function.

10 I --- I'm very worried  
11 about it, and I --- I try to --- I do  
12 my job. Where I live, I take the bus  
13 everywhere. I have one of these  
14 passes, it doesn't cost me anything,  
15 you know. You know, because I'm 86,  
16 and I'm able to function and go places  
17 and do things. And I am quite happy in  
18 my life because of Port Authority. And  
19 that's all I have to say.

20 MR. GASIOR:

21 Thank you. Next on our  
22 list we have Travis Barkefelt.

23 MR. BARKEFELT:

24 Hello, everybody, it's  
25 Travis Barkefelt. Sorry, my

1       handwriting's not the best, T-R-A-V-I-S  
2       B-A-R-K-E-F-E-L-T.

3                       So I'm sure when I'm  
4       talking to you today, I'm probably not  
5       going to say anything that hasn't  
6       already been said. It was kind of a  
7       game day decision for me to come out  
8       here today. Just that sort of bleeding  
9       heart in my, I guess, would feel wrong.  
10      I didn't come out here to say a few  
11      words because, at least from my  
12      perspective, I'm not so much speaking  
13      for myself here. I'm young, I'm able  
14      bodied, I --- I have a bike to get  
15      around. I can afford an Uber if I need  
16      it, but I really wanted to come out  
17      here speak for the people who couldn't  
18      make it. You know, the elderly, the  
19      disabled, children who are in school  
20      because I know a lot of kids in the  
21      Pittsburgh Public School District take  
22      advantage of the buses. And you know,  
23      those are all people whose lives would  
24      be extremely impacted by --- by these  
25      cuts that --- that are planned.

1                   And, like, so these  
2     people, they --- thousands wouldn't be  
3     able to have access to their jobs.  
4     They wouldn't be able to access  
5     necessary things like groceries, and  
6     people's quality of life would just  
7     dip. They wouldn't even be able to go  
8     and hop a bus to, like, Schenley Park  
9     and just enjoy a beautiful day out.  
10    And I think it would be a real shame to  
11    rob these people of that experience  
12    that all of us deserve to have in life.

13                  So I guess I'm sort of  
14    appealing to emotion a little bit here,  
15    but I know if I, you know, when I'm up  
16    in age, I love Pittsburgh. I hope I  
17    can stay here for most of my life, if  
18    not all of it. And I'd love to still  
19    have the opportunity to go to a park  
20    or, you know, I'll have access to  
21    groceries or, God forbid, with  
22    retirement the way it is nowadays, if I  
23    still have to get to work, I hope I  
24    have an accessible way to do that.

25                  So again, I probably



1        didn't say anything new, but I just  
2        felt like I should represent some of  
3        the people who couldn't come out here  
4        today.    Thank you.

5                    MR. GASIOR:

6                    Next up, we have Renee  
7        Wright.

8                    MS. WRIGHT:

9                    Hello, Renee Wright, R-E-  
10       N-E-E W-R-I-G-H-T.    And my zip code is  
11       15218, Edgewood Community.

12                   And probably similar to  
13       what Travis just said, I'm sure some of  
14       this you've heard before, and some of  
15       this, I just kind of broke some of this  
16       down into statistics, because that's  
17       what I do.    And I think then it really  
18       hit me how much of these services are  
19       being cut.

20                   So just to start off, you  
21       know, we are called Pittsburgh Regional  
22       Transit, but it seems like the name  
23       would have to change because we won't  
24       even be covering all the neighborhoods  
25       within the city, let alone the

1 surrounding regions. There's proposed  
2 to be 41 lines eliminated, 35 with  
3 major service reductions, 18 with minor  
4 service reductions. The bus line I  
5 took here is proposed to be eliminated.  
6 Two other bus lines in my neighborhood  
7 are proposed to be eliminated. One of  
8 them is the only one that currently  
9 services a grocery store and shopping  
10 center, so essentially cutting that off  
11 from anybody that doesn't have a  
12 vehicle or that can't walk there.

13 Forty-one (41) lines  
14 eliminated is 40 percent of the current  
15 lines available. This is going to have  
16 a drastic effect on current residents  
17 and any potential growth to the city.  
18 This will affect employment  
19 opportunities. This will create even  
20 more food deserts than we already have.  
21 This will cause more inequity. Not  
22 everyone has the ability to own a  
23 vehicle. They're very expensive. Car  
24 payments, insurance, gas, inspections,  
25 maintenance, and the cost of parking in

1 the city. That's not a viable option  
2 for everyone.

3 Public transportation is  
4 vital to get people where they need to  
5 go for food, work, appointments, and as  
6 others mentioned, entertainment and  
7 outdoor spaces that we all deserve to  
8 be able to participate in.

9 Public transit is also  
10 vital to keep the city vibrant and  
11 growing. We attract so many bright  
12 minds here to our universities, but how  
13 many are we losing to other cities that  
14 offer better amenities and better  
15 services? Because they have better  
16 ways to get around the city without  
17 having to have those expenses,  
18 especially starting out after college,  
19 of having to have a vehicle.

20 How many are we also  
21 losing that aren't looking to relocate  
22 here, or even relocate downtown where  
23 some of these office buildings are  
24 being turned into housing? But again,  
25 if you can't have a car because it's so

1 expensive, you still need ways to get  
2 around the city. How do we hope to  
3 attract new businesses and residents if  
4 we limit public transportation for  
5 them?

6 And as others mentioned,  
7 by ending service at 11:00 p.m., you're  
8 basically shutting down the city at  
9 that time. Not only for employees, but  
10 just again, entertainment venues. A  
11 vibrant city doesn't shut down at 11:00  
12 p.m. If we want our city and region to  
13 grow, we need to have a great public  
14 transportation infrastructure. It not  
15 only benefits the residents, but also  
16 businesses, cultural groups, and the  
17 environment. Thank you.

18 MR. GASIOR:

19 Next on our list, we have  
20 Sean Callahan.

21 MR. CALLAHAN:

22 If you will, before we  
23 start. Give me a sec, there we go.  
24 Okay, all good.

25 My name is Sean Callahan,

1       so that's S-E-A-N C-A-L-L-A-H-A-N.   My  
2       zip code is 15219.   I'm at Station  
3       Square.

4               So good evening, and I  
5       wanted to do a quick preface.   Some of  
6       these comments are very much not  
7       directed at the PRT Board.   It's more  
8       whatever state government will be  
9       looking at this considering the budget.  
10      So just know, some of these comments  
11      are not at you.

12              But as a recent college  
13      graduate who moved to the city a year  
14      ago, I'm in a very privileged position.  
15      I don't drive, but I live nearby  
16      several major bus stops and T stops.  
17      Everything I can want or need,  
18      including shopping locations, malls,  
19      medical --- medical care, church, all  
20      at my fingertips.   On top of this, yes,  
21      I am --- I do work in a well-paid  
22      industry.   My workplace is a 20 minute  
23      walk if I need to resort to that.   And  
24      I'm blessed to have close friends in a  
25      tight knit community that will help me

1 out with spots that are not very  
2 accessible for PRT. So it's been great  
3 for me this past year.

4 So given the reductions  
5 and eliminations that are being  
6 proposed, I'm sure there's a question  
7 even on whoever's going to look at this  
8 to consider the budget. What am I  
9 doing here? I'm someone who will be  
10 fine. I can take that extra Uber ride  
11 that's past 11 o'clock. It will not  
12 affect me very much, but I would argue  
13 the answer is yeah, it does affect me.  
14 And it will, and still does and will  
15 always, continue to affect every  
16 constituent in the Pittsburgh and  
17 surrounding regions, including those  
18 who don't use PRT at all.

19 So when I take T rides  
20 back from work, I see people digging  
21 into their jeans, into their purses,  
22 into their bags just to end up with  
23 enough coins and dollar bills just to  
24 meet the fare. Mixed with those with  
25 their nice Blazers and buttoned up

1 shirts and khakis and untouched,  
2 seemingly, laptop bags.

3 All of these people,  
4 they're riding the same trains, they're  
5 riding the same buses, right? People  
6 who maybe can't afford cars or the cost  
7 of driving consistently and people who  
8 likely will have more income in their  
9 middle age than I will ever dream of  
10 until maybe I'm retired. So, if you'll  
11 ever work in a city, any city, you see  
12 the congestion of vehicles during rush  
13 hour. But if you live in Pittsburgh,  
14 you see how that problem is compounded  
15 in an even smaller city. We're a city  
16 of bridges, narrow, winding roads, and  
17 at times, like many friends have told  
18 me, confusing exits. Choke points are  
19 plentiful.

20 If you want to get close  
21 to your work, good luck with that, with  
22 hundreds more that will be stranded or  
23 potentially constrained in how they can  
24 get to work. And that goes with  
25 eliminating the Silver Line, reducing

1 service of the Red Line, reducing  
2 services of all these bus lines. That  
3 is going to magnify the issue.

4 And I'm a walker saying  
5 this, I'm a bus rider saying this. I  
6 see that same issue. It will make it  
7 more unsafe and cramped during the work  
8 week, and not to mention the nightlife  
9 that's been very stressed. It'll make  
10 it even more horrific.

11 So even if the people,  
12 the ones who wear the blazers, the  
13 suits, the workers who have low income,  
14 who are maybe going to be cut off with  
15 their bus line and what have you, all  
16 of these people are in the same  
17 position. So the question I have for  
18 the government, for those who are  
19 considering the budget currently, you  
20 know, what I want to say more is you do  
21 have the money to help PRT. This is  
22 not about wanting an easy way out.  
23 This is about helping all of your  
24 constituents, regardless of your  
25 income, regardless of what background



1       you come from. You're helping all of  
2       us, and the price is your constituents.  
3       Thank you.

4                   MR. GASIOR:

5               Thank you. Next on our  
6       list, we have Diane Reynolds. Please  
7       state your full name again and spell it  
8       slowly and clearly for our Court  
9       Reporter.

10                  MS. REYNOLDS:

11               Hello. My name is Diane  
12       Reynolds, D-I-A-N-E. Reynolds, R-E-Y-  
13       N-O-L-D-S.

14               And I'm here because my  
15       neighbors, they weren't able to attend  
16       because they don't --- they don't  
17       drive. And they were very concerned,  
18       very, very worried. All weekend I was  
19       hearing them being afraid about what am  
20       I going to do if the service stops?  
21       And a lot of times, I take some of the  
22       elderly people to church up the street  
23       on Brownsville Road. I just give them  
24       a ride if I see them. Or one lady, she  
25       has some kind of mental health issues

1 and she's a loner, and she's always  
2 walking. And I'll just say, hey, I'll  
3 give you a ride. But she's always  
4 waiting for the bus, and she was very,  
5 very concerned.

6 So my concern is that  
7 people who are unable to take a bus,  
8 maybe elderly or mental health issues  
9 or, you know, they are unemployed, they  
10 need some consistent, a very good bus  
11 route. I'm --- I'm right behind  
12 Baldwin Health Center. Our parking  
13 lot, the parking lot is --- our  
14 apartment complex is in the same  
15 building as Baldwin Health Center. And  
16 a lot of the workers, they take the  
17 bus. So that's a concern. And then  
18 you have people who are, you know, so  
19 they --- their jobs will be in jeopardy  
20 because they won't be able to get to  
21 work.

22 I take the bus in --- oh,  
23 I drive in. But in the winter, I take  
24 the bus for safety purposes. A lot of  
25 times when the --- when the streets,

1       they don't plow the streets until  
2       later, I take the bus for safety  
3       because it's very hilly on Skyline  
4       Drive, near Baldwin Health Center. So  
5       I'm really worried because in the  
6       winter, how am I going to get to work?  
7       And then I have to depend, right?  
8       Currently, I have to depend on one  
9       hour. If I miss that one bus to get to  
10      work, I have to wait another hour. If  
11      they eliminate it, how are we going to  
12      get to work? So that was another ---  
13      that was another concern.

14                       And also, so, yeah.  
15      Those are the main concerns. How are  
16      we going to get there? Currently, it's  
17      just one hour, we missed the bus.  
18      Prospect --- Prospect Park, now it's  
19      called Hillside Meadows. That's a  
20      large --- a large community of people.  
21      I would say over 200 homes. And people  
22      really need consistent bus service. So  
23      please, just have mercy on us and ---  
24      and really make it work for us. Thank  
25      you very much.

1                   MS. KELLEMAN:

2                   Thank you.

3                   MR. GASIOR:

4                   Thank you.   Next on our  
5 list is Tayveon Smith.   As a reminder,  
6 you have three minutes for your public  
7 comment.   To help our Court Reporter,  
8 please state your full name again, and  
9 spell it slowly and clearly before you  
10 begin speaking.

11                   Tayveon Smith.   Okay.  
12 Next on the list is Maria Bryant.

13                   MS. BRYANT:

14                   Hi, my name is Maia  
15 Bryant, M-A-I-A B-R-Y-A-N-T.   I come  
16 from Penn Hills, 15235.

17                   I have seen --- I've been  
18 riding a bus since the '90s.   I have  
19 seen the price go up.   I have felt  
20 missing stops.   I can't get to the mall  
21 without taking --- Monroeville Mall,  
22 without taking four buses.   Two there,  
23 two back.   That's on the weekday.   One  
24 the weekend, I get one bus, and that  
25 means I have to walk from my address

1 all the way to Grand Boulevard.

2 Yesterday, this week, I  
3 had my coworkers at my job write down,  
4 circle any stops that are near them.  
5 Any stops that they take. And it's a  
6 lot of stops they're going to --- that  
7 we're losing. There's a lot of people  
8 that aren't going to be able to get to  
9 work. Eleven (11) o'clock, ten o'clock  
10 is when my job goes. We don't get out  
11 until, like, 10:30, 11 o'clock. And I  
12 am losing that opportunity of getting  
13 home safely. And if I'm not --- I do  
14 apologize.

15 If I do not have the  
16 opportunity to feel safe on the bus,  
17 and sometimes it's crowded and it's,  
18 I'm on the 77 and already. Already  
19 that bus is packed. And I can't  
20 imagine, like, 50 people on one bus  
21 just trying to get home, standing,  
22 sitting on a stressed out situation  
23 already, but crammed. We're like on  
24 --- I always joke with my friends who  
25 drive. We are, on the 77, like a tuna

1        --- like a --- you have a sardine can.  
2        You open it up, and it's a bunch of  
3        little fish. That's how it feels like  
4        on the bus.

5                        But we cannot lose all  
6        these buses. I love my job, and I love  
7        my coworkers. I cannot imagine going  
8        to work and seeing massive lines and  
9        our customers will be asking, why is  
10       there long lines? And I can just say,  
11       we can't get staff to get  
12       transportation to local, my job, which  
13       is a really busy location.

14                       I love my job. I love  
15       this. I --- I miss some of my old  
16       buses. I absolutely miss some of my  
17       old buses. But please reconsider and  
18       not cut some of these stops. It's  
19       going to hurt everybody's pocket.

20                       MS. KELLEMAN:

21                       Thank you. Maia, would  
22       you like to submit that list of stops  
23       as part of your testimony?

24                       MS. BRYANT:

25                       Yes, I would love to.

1                   MS. KELLEMAN:

2                   Great. And your shirt is  
3                   amazing. So, but just put your name or  
4                   a note on top of that, and then we'd be  
5                   happy to enter that into the record for  
6                   you. Thank you.

7                   MS. BRYANT:

8                   Thank you.

9                   MR. GASIOR:

10                  Next up, we have Zia  
11                  Lyle. You have three minutes for your  
12                  public comment. Please help our Court  
13                  Reporter out, state your full name and  
14                  spell it slowly and clearly before you  
15                  begin speaking.

16                  MS. LYLE:

17                  Hi, I'm Zia Lyle, Z-I-A  
18                  L-Y-L-E. I live in Shadyside, 15232.

19                  And I moved here about  
20                  five years ago for grad school at  
21                  Carnegie Mellon. And one of the things  
22                  that made me really love Pittsburgh and  
23                  want to stay here is how accessible the  
24                  city was. So I really appreciate PRT  
25                  and, you know, everything that the

1 transit system provides for this  
2 community. I think it's just been  
3 great to hear everyone's thoughts  
4 today, and I appreciate you all being  
5 here.

6 I want to talk about one  
7 specific change that I think will  
8 affect the constituency that I can  
9 represent, graduate students. Carnegie  
10 Mellon has a large portion of  
11 international students, students from  
12 outside of Pittsburgh. And one thing  
13 that they depend on is the transit  
14 system to get around. One route  
15 specifically, 28X, getting to the  
16 airport. That becomes a hurdle for  
17 students who have to spend, you know,  
18 \$40, \$50 on Ubers. And I think cutting  
19 the 28x and --- and not extending the  
20 service to downtown, let alone to other  
21 neighborhoods, like around my campus, I  
22 think is really going to detriment  
23 students. That on top of, you know,  
24 usually comes at a time when they're  
25 going to go home and see family. And



1 interrupting that service is a serious  
2 issue, and I think just changes  
3 people's impressions of the city as an  
4 accessible place to live and be --- and  
5 grow family and things like that. The  
6 airport's far enough away as it is, and  
7 I think anything that makes it easier  
8 for people to get there is really  
9 important.

10 So that service, I wanted  
11 to say, but generally I appreciate you  
12 being here. I appreciate how easy  
13 you've made it for us to contact our  
14 legislators, which I've done and I  
15 encourage everyone else to do so. So,  
16 thank you for your service, and I hope  
17 we can resolve this. Thanks.

18 MR. GASIOR:

19 Thank you. I'd like to  
20 return back to the 5:20 slot, Tayveon  
21 Smith. We were a little bit ahead of  
22 schedule. As you approach the mic, you  
23 have three minutes for your public  
24 comment. Please state your full name  
25 again, spell it slowly and clearly for

1       our Court Reporter before you begin  
2       speaking.    Thank you.

3                   MR. SMITH:

4                   Appreciate you.    My  
5       name's Tayveon Kevin Smith.    I  
6       appreciate you all for having me and  
7       being here as well.

8                   I spoke at your first  
9       hearing a little bit about my personal  
10      journey as well as some of my residents  
11      and neighbors and constituents and  
12      family members of how PRT's bus funding  
13      has affected our family throughout the  
14      years.    But today, I have a little bit  
15      different tone as far as more of a  
16      professional tone and having some  
17      experience in transportation.

18                  I had a small stint with  
19      ACCESS, I believe that's under your  
20      contract or whatnot, PRT funding as  
21      well.    And I'm here on behalf of them  
22      on more of ADA and accessibility, and  
23      folks that deal with Achieva as well as  
24      the Pittsburgh Institute, as well as,  
25      you know, some folks getting to their

1 dialysis appointments. I had a young  
2 lady by the name of Paula. She was 62  
3 years of age, and also Ms. Deborah that  
4 lived in 84 or whatnot that we had to  
5 pick up and we had to go out. They  
6 were going to drop them off to their  
7 dialysis appointments.

8 And when I got on ACCESS,  
9 I learned that they took over First  
10 Student's contract. And when ACCESS,  
11 they --- they service about 200 to 300  
12 riders a day. And when they took on  
13 First Student, it was an opportunity  
14 for them as well as PRODUCT, I believe.  
15 But they didn't have the manpower to  
16 take on 1,100 passengers that they  
17 would take on. And they were paying  
18 drivers \$14 to \$16 an hour, which I'm  
19 pretty sure they were grateful for, but  
20 for the work that they did and how long  
21 they would travel, it was a little  
22 complicated, to say.

23 So the drivers would  
24 arrive, and we wouldn't know we were  
25 late. But the riders would be, like,

1       you're an hour late, two hours late.  
2       So somebody going to a dialysis  
3       appointment that needs that dialysis  
4       treatment that can only receive 15  
5       minutes of that treatment opposed to an  
6       hour, that's detrimental. You have a  
7       grandmother, grandfather, parents and  
8       everything like that that could be  
9       and/or are affected by things like  
10      that. Thank you.

11                       We have Ms. Joan Candice  
12      that missed --- that missed field trips  
13      at the Pittsburgh Institute and the  
14      School of the Blind. And some of these  
15      students, they don't get too many  
16      social activities and social moments  
17      with their friends and peers. And when  
18      someone like ACCESS where --- where  
19      they're looking forward to events as  
20      going on a field trip with their peers  
21      and students and get to meet other  
22      things and see other things that in  
23      their day-to-day life they don't get to  
24      see, it's saddening and disheartening  
25      to me that we were late to their

1 appointment, and just to see how  
2 disappointed they were when we arrived  
3 and I had to put them back --- take  
4 them off, put them back on the ACCESS  
5 just to return them home.

6 So I --- I just ask that  
7 if we can get this funding, I ask you,  
8 please find it in your heart to get  
9 this funding, not only for me and my  
10 family, but also for those  
11 underprivileged and underserved and  
12 those with special needs. Appreciate  
13 you.

14 MR. GASIOR:

15 Thank you. Next on our  
16 list, we have Natalie Bullock.

17 MS. BULLOCK:

18 Hi, my name's Natalie  
19 Bullock. That's N-A-T-A-L-I-E B-U-L-L-  
20 O-C-K.

21 I'm sure I'm echoing a  
22 lot of the sentiments that you've  
23 likely already heard, but I wrote mine  
24 down because I'm not good off the cuff.  
25 So public transportation in Pittsburgh

1       isn't a luxury. It's a lifeline. It  
2       connects people to jobs, to medical  
3       care, to schools, and to each other.  
4       Cutting bus and light rail service  
5       means cutting off access to opportunity  
6       and dignity, especially for our  
7       seniors, people with disabilities, low  
8       income families, and essential workers.

9               Transit cuts are short  
10      sighted. They widen the inequity gap,  
11      damage our local economy, and harm the  
12      environment by pushing more people into  
13      cars, even if they can't afford one.  
14      We should be investing in more service,  
15      not less. We should be expanding  
16      access, improving frequency, and  
17      lowering barriers to fare, not making  
18      public transportation harder and more  
19      expensive to use.

20             So I urge our city and  
21      state leaders, do not balance the  
22      budget on the backs of working people.  
23      Don't make the only consideration for  
24      this city hosting the NFL draft.  
25      Consider how the people that live in

1       this city will get around before,  
2       during, and after all of the NFL  
3       rumblers are gone. Fully fund public  
4       transportation, protect our buses, keep  
5       the T running, and ensure that  
6       Pittsburgh remains a city of  
7       connection, not of isolation. A city  
8       without transit is a city without a  
9       future. Thank you.

10               MR. GASIOR:

11               At this time, we'd like  
12       to take a short recess. 5:40? Is that  
13       okay to return?

14               ---

15       (WHEREUPON, A SHORT BREAK WAS TAKEN  
16       DURING THE PROCEEDING.)

17               ---

18               MR. GASIOR:

19               First on our list is Lena  
20       Woodcock. As a reminder, you have  
21       three minutes for your public comment.  
22       To help our Court Reporter, please  
23       state your full name, and spell it  
24       slowly and clearly before you begin  
25       speaking. Thank you.

1                   ATTORNEY CETRA:

2                   And also, just as an  
3 additional reminder for those who are  
4 just joining us, you know, the purpose  
5 here is we are receiving public  
6 comment, so we are not responding to  
7 questions from this table, but we do  
8 have staff outside. If you have  
9 further questions or anything you want  
10 to follow up on, you can do so after  
11 you testify. Thank you.

12                   MS. WOODCOCK:

13                   My name is Lena Woodcock,  
14 and it's L-E-N-A W-O-O-D-C-O-C-K, and I  
15 live in Squirrel Hill, 15217.

16                   And I don't have a lot  
17 different to say than anyone else. I  
18 just wanted to add that, like, there's  
19 definitely buses I take every week,  
20 like the 49 and the 41 and the 65, that  
21 all would be eliminated, it sounds  
22 like. Which would be pretty bad  
23 because I take them to work, and I  
24 would be against that. And also,  
25 that's definitely something the 61s,



1 all of those not having the service  
2 after 11:00 I think would also have a  
3 negative impact on, I think, pretty  
4 much everyone because people who are  
5 taking the bus after 11:00, especially  
6 on those routes, I feel like probably  
7 shouldn't be driving for the most part.  
8 And I think that'd be bad for  
9 Pittsburgh as a whole. And that's all  
10 I really had to say. Thank you.

11 ATTORNEY CETRA:

12 Thank you, Lena.

13 MR. GASIOR:

14 Thank you. Next on our  
15 list, Poetic Session. Yeah, if you'd  
16 like to speak, please head out to the  
17 table to register.

18 MS. SESSION:

19 Hello, everyone. Nice to  
20 see you guys.

21 ATTORNEY CETRA:

22 So whenever you're ready,  
23 yeah. You can just state your name  
24 again and spell your last name for us.

25 MS. SESSION:

1 Name is Poetic Session.  
2 It's spelled P-O-E-T-I-C S-E-S-S-I-O-N,  
3 and my zip code or community would be  
4 the Hill District, and that's 15219.

5 ATTORNEY CETRA:

6 Whenever you're ready.

7 MS. SESSION:

8 Pittsburgh has been  
9 renowned for its accessibility in  
10 public transportation, ranking one of  
11 the highest nationally due to our 446  
12 bridges, the 92 bus, three subway  
13 lines, and two inclines. On PRT's  
14 website, they even boast about having  
15 more than 700 buses, 80 light rails,  
16 and providing more than 200,000 rides  
17 just on the weekdays. We even ranked  
18 seventh least car dependent metro in  
19 the United States due to our public  
20 transportation.

21 Many people move here  
22 because they rely upon the  
23 transportation, and they feel that this  
24 city is safe and accessible for them.  
25 And now we're going to a downward slope

1 at the expense of our working class  
2 citizens.

3 We, the people, can  
4 hardly pay for groceries, our rent, our  
5 child care, our education, or even  
6 everyday activities without having to  
7 worry about skipping a meal or if we  
8 have to pay --- if --- we can't even  
9 pay our own bills. It's getting harder  
10 and harder to live, and this is going  
11 to be something that affects all of us  
12 very deeply in every aspect of our  
13 lives.

14 And now, we're being told  
15 that we're going to pay less --- no,  
16 we're going to pay more for less  
17 accessibility. For less lines, for  
18 having to commute even more, having to  
19 spend more money that we don't have,  
20 and we can't afford. We see how the  
21 meetings are being done during the  
22 weekdays. There's less online presence  
23 or Zoom. There is --- the hearings are  
24 being made during work and commute  
25 times, and it's going to be --- it's

1       been making us, harder for our voices  
2       to be heard. And we're telling you, as  
3       the people, that it's not going to  
4       work. We are not going to take this  
5       sitting, and we will stand up for the  
6       right to accessible, affordable, and  
7       public transportation.

8               Because even the strong  
9       decision that's being made, we have to  
10      make sure that you --- you guys as well  
11      advocate for that as well. Because  
12      it's very important to us, and I  
13      imagine it affects you guys as well.

14              TIMEKEEPER:

15              One minute left.

16              MS. SESSION:

17              Thank you. We will  
18      continue, day by day, hour by hour,  
19      minute by minute, to make sure that you  
20      and everyone who's being involved in  
21      this decision knows that this is a  
22      detrimental change for everyone.  
23      Everyone from the infants, all the way  
24      to the elderly. And it's especially  
25      going to affect our working class

1 citizens. It's going to affect the  
2 disabled, it's going to affect  
3 everyone.

4 I implore you that we  
5 find more ways to address these funding  
6 problems and budgeting without harming  
7 the various people that keep the city  
8 running. Because without the people,  
9 we don't have a city. Thank you for  
10 your time.

11 ATTORNEY CETRA:

12 Thank you.

13 MR. GASIOR:

14 Next on our list is  
15 Hannah Yomi. Hannah Yomi, Y-O-M-I.  
16 Next on our list is Sam Popivchak. I  
17 think ---.

18 ATTORNEY CETRA:

19 Oh, Hannah's here.

20 MR. GASIOR:

21 Back up for one ---  
22 sorry.

23 ATTORNEY CETRA:

24 Whenever you're ready, if  
25 you could just state your name again,

1 spell your last name, and then you can  
2 proceed.

3 MS. YOMI:

4 All right, thank you.

5 My name is Hannah Yomi,  
6 H-A-N-N-A-H Y-O-M-I.

7 So first of all, I'm not  
8 a Pittsburgh native. I'm from page  
9 County, Maryland. But four years ago,  
10 I got accepted to the University of  
11 Pittsburgh, and I decided to call it my  
12 home. The first thing my parents said,  
13 you got free buses? And as a student  
14 and someone from the DMV whose metro  
15 can cost from \$250 to \$625 per trip, I  
16 was excited at the opportunity to be  
17 able to discover Pittsburgh through the  
18 --- through the buses.

19 I took the 58 all the  
20 time to see my older cousin, and he  
21 would always ask me, am I getting in  
22 trouble on the buses? I would take the  
23 54 to go to Carson Street where I'm not  
24 supposed to be, and hang out with my  
25 friends. I would take the 93 almost

1 every weekend to visit my friend's  
2 apartment because I really didn't want  
3 to walk 30 minutes from north O to  
4 South O.

5 All of these buses are  
6 either seeing major reductions or being  
7 cut entirely. Now, look at it from the  
8 college student perspective. 11:00  
9 p.m. is not when students start going  
10 out --- stop going out, it's when they  
11 start. So now, we're seeing an  
12 increase of college students going out  
13 without any access to transportation  
14 home. We're looking at the 28X being  
15 cut by 11:00 p.m. As a non-Pittsburgh  
16 native, the 28X and I were best friends  
17 when I was going home, coming back from  
18 going home and visiting my family.

19 If you've ever taken a  
20 --- try to take an Uber back home at  
21 12:00 a.m., the Uber prices start at  
22 \$100. \$100 just to get 20, 30 minutes  
23 back home is unreasonable. And now  
24 we're seeing that there's going to be  
25 an increase of demand for Ubers and

1 transportation afterwards, which is  
2 just going to see an increased cost of  
3 Uber prices. That's talking about how  
4 are people getting back home.

5 I also work at Chipotle,  
6 and after a long day I like to take my  
7 little bus home to get back from work.  
8 So --- so now we're talking about  
9 working people not having access to get  
10 home after work. Now, we're talking  
11 about minimum wage in Pennsylvania  
12 being \$7.25 an hour. Let's say an Uber  
13 home cost \$20 at 12:0 a.m. So you're  
14 asking people to put three hours of  
15 their wages into getting home from work  
16 every single night, and that's not even  
17 talking about the actual reduction to  
18 people not even having access to the  
19 bus anymore to get from where they live  
20 to where they work. That's going to  
21 have an economic impact far beyond what  
22 we're talking about right now.

23 So, I implore you and  
24 everybody here to advocate and speak to  
25 their representatives so we can make



1       sure this \$100 million deficit is not a  
2       deficit anymore, and we have enough  
3       money to not only stop the cuts, but  
4       increase service. Thank you.

5               ATTORNEY CETRA:

6               Thank you, Hannah.

7               MR. GASIOR:

8               Next up, we have Sam  
9       Popivchak. Apologize. As you get to  
10      the mic, please state your full name  
11      again, and spell it slowly and clearly  
12      for the Court Reporter. Thank you.

13              MR. POPIVCHAK:

14              My name's Samson  
15      Popivchak, S-A-M-S-O-N P-O-P-I-V-C-H-A-  
16      K. I live in Lawrenceville. My zip  
17      code is 15201.

18              I am a public school  
19      student for SciTech, and I take the bus  
20      every morning and every afternoon to  
21      get home and to get to school. And the  
22      bus that I take is 93, and it's  
23      getting, like. Like, there's like a  
24      small thing put to it. It's, like,  
25      minor reduction. So that means I have

1 an increased wait time, which might not  
2 seem like a lot. Might seem like it's  
3 still there, but overall if I am, like,  
4 it's, like, every 40 minutes or  
5 something that bus comes, and I can't  
6 get there too early because I won't  
7 have enough time to, like, I need,  
8 like, nine hours of sleep. And if I  
9 get there, then I would be late. So  
10 that means I will --- if I'm late too  
11 much, I get an in school suspension or  
12 I'm just losing education. Those are  
13 two things that could happen. Or I  
14 won't be able to have breakfast, which  
15 a lot of kids rely on that. And I  
16 think it's, like, a really good thing  
17 public schools do. But it's very  
18 important. I feel that people should  
19 be able to get to school on time, and  
20 not have to be waiting for the buses.

21 Another thing about  
22 schools, like as a student point of  
23 view, is over the summer, a lot of kids  
24 have summer jobs which are really  
25 reliant on their families, and they

1 have it during the school year too.  
2 But it's nice that we get the cards.  
3 But during the summer, we still have to  
4 --- we have to pay on ourselves for  
5 transportation. And as it's  
6 increasing, it's getting harder for,  
7 like --- like --- like in having to,  
8 like, matter to take the bus. Like, so  
9 many kids either are late to their  
10 jobs. I've heard people lose their  
11 jobs. People have to, like, leave  
12 school early to get to their jobs, and  
13 to rely and, like --- like --- like, I  
14 don't know, provide for their family.  
15 Like, they --- like, only one parent or  
16 not have a parent at all. Like, they  
17 need to be able to have access to  
18 transportation, public transportation,  
19 to be able to get to their job and be  
20 able to provide. I think this is super  
21 important.

22 I'm done.

23 MR. GASIOR:

24 Next on our list we have  
25 Robert Helwig.

1                   MR. HELWIG:

2                   Good evening, Robert  
3                   Helwig, R-O-B-E-R-T H-E-L-W-I-G.

4                   Thank you for your time  
5                   this evening. I've been very fortunate  
6                   to work in public service in a few  
7                   different ways over the past few years.  
8                   And public transportation connected me  
9                   to my constituents, to the people of  
10                  this county for me to serve them. 2021  
11                  to 2023, I worked as a staff member to  
12                  a member of the Pennsylvania House  
13                  Representatives down in Braddock. I  
14                  relied on the bus five days a week, to  
15                  and from. My constituents, Braddock,  
16                  Rink, and Swissvale. They rely on that  
17                  service as well.

18                  2024 to 2025, I'm  
19                  privileged of serving the people of  
20                  this county, working for a judge in the  
21                  Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas.  
22                  I relied on the bus to get me down to  
23                  the city county building, to and from,  
24                  five days a week to serve the people of  
25                  this county. And I'm very honored that

1 I can continue that service as an  
2 assistant county solicitor. I'm here  
3 speaking as an individual today.

4 But again, I rely on the  
5 bus to serve the people of this county  
6 five days a week, to and from work.  
7 And I know they rely on that as well.  
8 I choose public service --- it's more  
9 of, like, an obligation for me. It's  
10 like, I just feel it.

11 I choose to do that  
12 service here because I love this place,  
13 and there's no place I want to make  
14 better more than here. And these  
15 proposed cuts by every metric that is  
16 not at dollar value or a spreadsheet  
17 right now will make this place worse.  
18 And people of this place deserve the  
19 best county that we can give them. So  
20 I ask you to carry our voices up to  
21 Harrisburg to secure sustainable, long  
22 term funding for our public  
23 transportation system because the  
24 people here need it and they deserve.  
25 So, thank you.

1                   MR. GASIOR:

2                   Next up, we have Rebecca  
3                   Carlson. As a reminder, you have three  
4                   minutes for your public comment. To  
5                   help our Court Reporter, please state  
6                   your name fully, and spell it slowly  
7                   and clearly before you begin speaking.  
8                   Thank you.

9                   MS. CARLSON:

10                  Hello. My name is  
11                  Rebecca Carlson, R-E-B-E-C-C-A C-A-R-L-  
12                  S-O-N. I am a resident of Bethel Park,  
13                  zip code 15102, and I live a very short  
14                  walk away from the Silver Line.

15                  While I am not a daily  
16                  commuter, I have a subscription at the  
17                  Benedum, and I regularly attend events  
18                  downtown. The Silver Line is safe and  
19                  reliable transit, especially during the  
20                  winter months. I've never had to worry  
21                  about road conditions or parking or  
22                  traffic or any of that nonsense. As I  
23                  continue to age, alternative modes of  
24                  transit become more important. And  
25                  since it is so close to my home, it is

1       such a convenient way to get into town.

2               I would happily accept a  
3 permanent transfer at Washington  
4 Junction to complete my downtown  
5 journey than lose the Silver Line  
6 altogether. Please do not let this  
7 vital infrastructure go to waste.  
8 Thank you very much.

9               MR. GASIOR:

10              Next up, we have Julie  
11 Daw.

12              MS. DAW:

13              Hi, good evening. My  
14 name is Julie Daw. I live in  
15 Bloomfield in the City of Pittsburgh  
16 where my zip code is 15224. I work  
17 downtown as an attorney for a labor  
18 union. I'm here today in my personal  
19 capacity.

20              I take the bus every day  
21 to work, and that's because I prefer  
22 the bus. As prior commenters have  
23 mentioned, the bus is safe and  
24 reliable. And I'm here today because  
25 I'm very concerned about the proposed

1 cuts that we're facing.

2 I wanted to give you a  
3 specific example of the huge impact  
4 that these cuts would have on my life.  
5 I see a doctor regularly on the north  
6 side, and I take the 54 from Bloomfield  
7 to the north side. And then, I take  
8 the bus from the north side into town,  
9 and I get to work on time. I do all  
10 that for \$2.75. That's the fare.

11 If I had to drive, which  
12 is something that I'm fortunate enough  
13 that I could do, I would have to pay  
14 probably \$30 to \$40 in parking because  
15 I'd have to park on the north side at  
16 AGH, and then I have to find parking in  
17 town. And you don't always know where  
18 you're going to find parking in town.  
19 I know in my building, I would have to  
20 get on a waiting list to even get a  
21 lease. So the cost that I would be  
22 looking at would be \$30 to \$40 just to  
23 get to my doctor's appointment, versus  
24 right now what I pay is \$2.75.

25 The cost of everything



1 right now are rising, and if we face  
2 more PRT cuts, those impacts will have  
3 disproportionate effects on our  
4 neighbors who rely on transit the most.  
5 I encourage you to share my story with  
6 the decision makers in Harrisburg, and  
7 call on them to support the Transit for  
8 All PA plan for sustainable transit  
9 funding. This issue affects  
10 Pennsylvanians in every county of the  
11 Commonwealth, and not just here.

12 And since I have time,  
13 I'll also add that I'm deeply concerned  
14 about the impact that these cuts would  
15 have on our economy and on the  
16 workforce in Allegheny County.  
17 Obviously, PRT jobs would be at risk  
18 and lots of other workers. I think we  
19 heard from a high school student who  
20 said his classmates could be losing  
21 their jobs because they wouldn't be  
22 able to reliably get to work on time.  
23 So there's just so many negative  
24 impacts on our economy in Allegheny  
25 County, and across the Commonwealth

1       that we could see. So once again, I'd  
2       really urge you to support the Transit  
3       for All PA funding plan, and encourage  
4       the legislature to do the same. Thank  
5       you.

6                   MR. GASIOR:

7               Next up, we have Danielle  
8       Grentz. Please state your full name  
9       again, and spell it slowly and clearly  
10      for our Court Reporter before you begin  
11      speaking. Thank you.

12                   MS. GRENTZ:

13               Good evening. My name's  
14       Danielle Grentz, G-R-E-N-T-Z. First  
15       name Danielle, D-A-N-I-E-L-L-E. And I  
16       live currently in Baldwin, in 15236 zip  
17       code, but I've also been a very long,  
18       long time resident in the community of  
19       Carrick, in 15210, as well. So I have  
20       experience with that.

21               Currently, I work in town  
22       as well. And as prior commenters have  
23       talked, a lot of the cuts and stuff are  
24       going to affect a ton of bus routes.  
25       The one that I take right now is the

1 Y47, and that one I know is one of the  
2 buses that will get totally eliminated  
3 under the proposed cuts, as well as a  
4 lot of limitations being put on --- I  
5 see --- I help out my dad with a lot  
6 because he has disabilities. He also  
7 uses access to be able to get to  
8 medical appointments. So I'm worried  
9 about both of those, with the proposed  
10 cuts under the new plan. You know, I  
11 really want, you know, the legislators  
12 to be able to increase funding, you  
13 know, for people with disabilities.  
14 You know, as well as, you know, cuts.

15 I would be able to drive  
16 over, but you know, as, you know,  
17 prior, you know, prior commenters have  
18 said, there's a lot of cuts that are  
19 happening. And with all the, you know,  
20 rates with parking, especially in  
21 downtown, like, it's very --- I know at  
22 my place, it's \$15 a day just to park.  
23 So that'd be a huge, like, you know,  
24 increase. And I don't know if I can  
25 make the budget for that just to work.

1     You know, that's why I take the bus,  
2     because it's safe, reliable, it's easy.  
3     But it's also one of those things where  
4     I, you know, I need to use it.

5                     And then also with the  
6     services, I know a lot of people that  
7     also work overnight shifts, so they  
8     work very late. And a lot of the cuts,  
9     I know they're happening past 11  
10    o'clock at night. I know that'll be a  
11    very drastic, you know, service to the  
12    whole Pittsburgh community as well as  
13    Pennsylvania just because there's a lot  
14    of people that make their money, you  
15    know, at night time. They're having  
16    bars or there's, like, concerts or big  
17    events that are happening here. I know  
18    the NHL --- NFL draft is happening next  
19    year. You know, a lot of those people  
20    are going to be out late, and how they  
21    going to be able to get home?

22                    You know, I know that  
23    there's, you know, Uber and Lyft and  
24    other services out there, but that's  
25    going to make it very difficult for a

1 lot of people to --- to make it back.  
2 So, I just wanted to, you know, be able  
3 to state that. So, thank you very  
4 much. I appreciate your time.

5 MR. GASIOR:

6 Next up, we have Phyllis  
7 DiDiano. And please state your name  
8 for the Court Reporter slowly and  
9 clearly before you begin speaking.  
10 Thank you.

11 MS. DIDIANO:

12 My name is Phyllis  
13 DiDiano, P-H-Y-L-L-I-S D-I-D-I-A-N-O.  
14 And I live in Beechview, 15216.

15 Today, I'm here on behalf  
16 of Age Friendly Neighborhoods  
17 Beechview, a group that received grant  
18 funding through Age Friendly Greater  
19 Pittsburgh to embark on projects to  
20 amplify older adult voices and foster  
21 intergenerational connections. This  
22 group of residents has included  
23 advocacy as one of our activities. I'm  
24 here today to share some of our  
25 thoughts on the continued need for

1       adequate and safe transit for our  
2       community.

3               I'm sure by the last day  
4       of live testimony, you've heard it all,  
5       but I think hearing similar points  
6       repeatedly bring to bear the importance  
7       that transit plays in all of our lives.  
8       Whether one takes public transportation  
9       or not, it affects them, and the  
10      commute or travel in the area is  
11      impacted.

12             In an urban setting,  
13      sometimes public transit is the only  
14      way to easily provide a vital link for  
15      work, entertainment, medical, and other  
16      basic needs, such as grocery shopping  
17      for those who have no personal means of  
18      transportation. Some rely on public  
19      transit as the most fiscally viable  
20      means to move about the city and  
21      county, and choose where to live based  
22      on that availability.

23             It will be particularly  
24      difficult for individuals with less  
25      income and those with no way to

1 generate more income to manage their  
2 daily lives with the drastic cuts to  
3 service being suggested.

4 Also important to us is  
5 fair working conditions for the drivers  
6 and all the other staff that keep PRT  
7 running. We understand there's a great  
8 need for more and sustainable funding,  
9 as is the case in a lot of other cities  
10 in the country. Our community has  
11 contacted legislators, participate in  
12 public comment opportunities held by  
13 PRT to provide input on reduced  
14 service, or when service changes with  
15 the light rail going right through our  
16 main thoroughfare, Beechview, is  
17 impacted, as well as provided input on  
18 the more recent bus line redesign plan.

19 Having light rail trains  
20 conveniently serve our neighborhood,  
21 allows community members of all ages to  
22 reduce automobile emissions by  
23 connecting to buses, enabling trips to  
24 commute, go to school, serve as  
25 caregivers, go shopping, visit

1       entertainment venues, and more.

2               Our quality of life is of  
3       utmost importance, but the plans that  
4       we see proposed will certainly affect  
5       the local economy. We need PRT to  
6       secure sustainable funding to provide  
7       us with even more options, not less.  
8       Cuts in service to some communities  
9       altogether, eliminating schedules  
10      entirely will not --- only be  
11      detrimental to our daily lives, but  
12      impact employers and brick and mortar  
13      businesses and such. The cuts are too  
14      much, too dire.

15              I'd like to leave a  
16      request. Please look at your current  
17      practices to see if there are internal  
18      changes to be made to provide  
19      operational savings so that the public  
20      does not have to bear the full brunt of  
21      the proposed reductions. Thank you for  
22      your attention.

23              MR. GASIOR:

24              Next on our list, we have  
25      Sue Pfeuffer. Pfeuffer. If you could.



1                   MS. PFEUFFER:

2                   Just the way it's  
3 spelled.

4                   MR. GASIOR:

5                   If you could spell that  
6 for our Court Reporter, that would be  
7 appreciated.

8                   MS. PFEUFFER:

9                   I will. Hi, my name is  
10 Sue Pfeuffer. It's S-U-E, Sue.  
11 Pfeuffer, P-F-E-U-F-F-E-R. Good old  
12 German name, right? Okay.

13                   I am the age friendly  
14 ambassador for the Beechview community.  
15 This is, makes me very nervous because  
16 usually I don't speak in public. But  
17 I'm here to not only address the  
18 proposed PRT service cuts, but also the  
19 cuts to paratransit, ACCESS, et cetera.  
20 These cuts to the ACCESS program are  
21 predicted to have an increase of 20  
22 percent, and more than 50 percent in  
23 service reduction. There are a lot of  
24 older adults that would rather utilize  
25 public, like trains and buses, but

1       insufficiencies in service make this  
2       impossible for them. I am one of those  
3       that take first transit to do my  
4       grocery shopping, get to my doctor's  
5       appointments, and et cetera.

6               Next, as far as adding  
7       more frequent service to the Blue Line  
8       and cutting back on the service on the  
9       Red Line, which runs right through  
10      Beechview. A lot of my friends and  
11      neighbors use the Red Line daily to get  
12      to and from their places of employment.  
13      And this will create a hardship for  
14      them.

15              Finally, I too feel that  
16      maybe the costs in upper management at  
17      PRT is possibly top heavy, and all  
18      those --- these cuts to service are  
19      once again at the expense of the little  
20      guys who are the regular riders. Thank  
21      you for your time.

22              MR. GASIOR:

23              Next up, we have Leslie  
24      Nunley.

25              MS. NUNLEY:

1                   Spell my name. Hello,  
2           it's --- can you hear me? Yes. It's  
3           Leslie Nunley, N-U-N-L-E-Y.

4                   This was my last minute  
5           thing coming up here this --- this  
6           evening. I have one question real  
7           quick. When's the last time any of you  
8           in this panel have ridden a Port  
9           Authority bus? Who --- PRT? Yes,  
10          three? Okay, good. I just want to  
11          mention that I ride just about every  
12          bus in this city. I've been on the  
13          28X, the Lincoln, Frankstown. I'm from  
14          the Allentown area as of today, and I  
15          want to tell you I love Pittsburgh and  
16          the bus service.

17                  I talk to a lot of  
18          people. I talk to a lot of drivers. I  
19          understand what people are going  
20          through. You have to let the state  
21          legislature, let them know this is not  
22          a public welfare system. You  
23          yourselves ride your buses. You tell  
24          them, we need this money for our  
25          service. It is extremely important for

1       our economy. We do not want our  
2       economy to fail. People tell me if I  
3       don't have the Silver Line, I can't get  
4       to work. If I don't have this bus  
5       service, that 28x? I used to work at  
6       the airport. People have --- that new  
7       --- that new airport, the new section  
8       is opening up September 23rd. People  
9       need that bus to get back and forth to  
10      work.

11                       For a while up and until  
12      May 15th, I used to have to get an Uber  
13      or Lyft, the company reimbursed me. I  
14      don't have to go out there anymore,  
15      thank God. But that started getting  
16      real costly. You have to let the state  
17      know we need the money. People cannot  
18      keep affording Lyfts and Ubers to get  
19      back and forth. We need these buses.  
20      We need new buses. I know about the  
21      electric buses. The batteries won't  
22      recharge. I know about that. I've  
23      talked to a lot of drivers because I'm  
24      on just about every bus. I work for  
25      Rite Aid out on Banksville Road, so I'm

1       sure you're familiar with that, what's  
2       going on with Rite Aid. But now I have  
3       to find another job because they're  
4       getting ready to shut them all down by  
5       September, probably August.

6               But please, let our state  
7       know. Let the Governor know, you got  
8       to fight for our money. We don't want  
9       this economy to fail. It is imperative  
10      that we get the money for our bus  
11      service in Pittsburgh. Thank you for  
12      your time, and you have a good evening.

13               MR. GASIOR:

14              Next up, we have Speaker  
15      Sam Spearing. As a reminder, you have  
16      three minutes for your public comment.  
17      To help the Court Reporter, please  
18      state your full name again, and spell  
19      it slowly and clearly before you begin  
20      speaking. Thank you.

21               MR. SPEARING:

22              All right.

23              My name is Sam, S-A-M.  
24      Spearing, S-P-E-A-R-I-N-G.

25              I want to start by

1        thanking everybody who's come out.  
2        There's been people from all over the  
3        city and county, and it's wonderful. I  
4        want to thank all of you for being  
5        here. My understanding is it's a legal  
6        obligation, but I know that none of us  
7        really want to be here.

8                        I'm not really going  
9        touch on, you know, all of the broad  
10       economic impacts because I think, you  
11       know, PRT and a lot of advocates have  
12       really already done that work. I'm  
13       going to talk a little bit about my  
14       neighborhood. I'm a resident of  
15       Bloomfield, and I can't emphasize  
16       enough that transit is essential to  
17       making our neighborhood livable and  
18       affordable. We're blessed to be served  
19       by many routes. I counted it today. I  
20       want to say it's six, but I'm sure I  
21       might be missing one or two, so don't  
22       hold me to that number.

23                       I personally commute a  
24       few days a week to downtown. Most  
25       often, I ride the 87. But one of the

1        wonderful benefits of all the service  
2        we have is that if there's not an 87  
3        coming, I can catch the 88, because I  
4        live right between Friendship and Penn  
5        Avenue. And so, that frequent service  
6        is really essential to, you know,  
7        knowing that I can reliably get transit  
8        to my job.

9                        I was looking at some of  
10       the more recent American Community  
11       survey estimates today, and the  
12       estimates are that roughly 900  
13       neighbors in Bloomfield commute using  
14       transit as their primary means of  
15       commuting. And that doesn't capture  
16       all of the trips into the neighborhood,  
17       and it doesn't capture particularly all  
18       of the trips into the neighborhood to  
19       children's hospital and West Penn  
20       Hospital, who both employ, you know, I  
21       believe the number's in the thousands,  
22       plus all of the patients coming in.

23                      And so, you know, you  
24       look at all of those trips coming into  
25       and out of our neighborhood every day.

1 I don't want those all to be cars.  
2 And, you know, the data shows that if  
3 people are commuting by car in  
4 particular, they're most likely  
5 commuting just by themselves. Not many  
6 people are carpooling. And so, you  
7 know, that would dramatically reshape  
8 what it's like to live in my  
9 neighborhood.

10 And I will acknowledge  
11 that I would say Bloomfield fares  
12 better than many areas in regards to  
13 service reductions. Part of it is the  
14 benefit of the topography of  
15 Pittsburgh. A lot of the buses have to  
16 sort of run between the Garfield Hill  
17 and the valley where the busway is.  
18 So, you know, we benefit in that way, I  
19 suppose. But these reductions in  
20 service would still leave my  
21 neighborhood and others less connected  
22 and underserved. Thank you.

23 MR. GASIOR:

24 Next up is Kristin Green.

25 MS. GREEN:



1 Kristin, K-R-I-S-T-I-N.  
2 Green, G-R-E-E-N, 15217. That is  
3 Squirrel Hill, one of the neighborhoods  
4 that has probably the largest or a lot  
5 of buses that go through it.

6 Unfortunate, I came here  
7 from Florida, sight unseen, to  
8 Pittsburgh for a job. And I was  
9 fortunate, thanks to my mom, to get  
10 situated in Squirrel Hill. And I ride,  
11 I've ridden quite a few of the bus ---  
12 buses just for fun. So when I see  
13 these people that only have one bus in  
14 their neighborhood, and they have to  
15 wait at the time, like, 40 minutes and  
16 then you're eliminating the buses,  
17 that's not fair to them.

18 And I know the 61s, they  
19 pick up all these kids from around the  
20 city to go to the various schools. And  
21 sometimes I don't ride the bus because  
22 it's basically at that --- at certain  
23 points, it just becomes a school bus.  
24 And you have to adjust the rate --- the  
25 times for them. They're not going to

1 get to school on time, or they have to  
2 wake up super earlier to get to school  
3 and wait longer to get from school to  
4 wherever. And then the kids that work  
5 at Kennywood take the 61C. That's a  
6 long drive. That's a long bus ride in  
7 and of itself. But then if you're  
8 going to be eliminating the times after  
9 11:00, that's not going to help either.

10 And then I also take the  
11 28X to the airport. If you eliminate  
12 that, as others have mentioned, that's  
13 a \$30, just \$30 bus ride to the --- to  
14 the airport. Coming back from the  
15 airport, it could be whatever price  
16 they feel like surge pricing. And then  
17 at night, downtown, like someone else  
18 has mentioned, college kids don't wake  
19 up or go out. And I didn't until 11  
20 o'clock. And you don't want to be  
21 driving around downtown after 11:00.  
22 So eliminating, stopping services at  
23 11:00 will have detrimental impact for  
24 people that want to go downtown to  
25 hockey game, baseball, bars, et cetera.

1                   And lastly, the Silver  
2                   Line. I found that out by accident  
3                   because I wanted to get a book from  
4                   Bethel Park, so Bethel Park Library.  
5                   The Silver Line stops right at the  
6                   library. I can walk to the Silver  
7                   Line, get the bus, or go to the  
8                   library, take the Silver Line back. If  
9                   that's eliminated, I don't know what I  
10                  would do. Thank you.

11                   MR. GASIOR:

12                  Next on the list, we have  
13                  Takumi Davis. Takumi Davis. You'll  
14                  have three minutes for your public  
15                  comment. For the Court Reporter,  
16                  please state your full name, and spell  
17                  it slowly and clearly before you begin.  
18                  Thank you.

19                   MS. DAVIS:

20                  Yes. Takumi Davis, T-A-  
21                  K-U-M-I D-A-V-I-S. Originally from  
22                  Cleveland, Ohio, and currently residing  
23                  in Swissvale, 15218.

24                   Public transit was my key  
25                  to growth and community engagement

1 without needing a car. As a commuting  
2 CMU student and architectural  
3 professional, I've grown to appreciate  
4 the access to Pittsburgh and beyond  
5 that PRT has provided for me. Not only  
6 has it given me the ability to settle  
7 in Swissvale by not needing to pay for  
8 parking and car maintenance, but it  
9 also has allowed me to explore what  
10 makes Pittsburgh one of the most  
11 livable cities in the US.

12 However, this livability  
13 is not equal among its residents.  
14 Socioeconomic and racial minorities,  
15 particularly those who have lived in  
16 the city for generations, are among  
17 those who don't get to bask in that  
18 distinct livability. Those in  
19 communities such as Braddock,  
20 Hazelwood, Homewood, and others seldom  
21 get to live the statistical advantages  
22 of Pittsburgh that are advertised as  
23 transplants like myself. Their  
24 struggles are the reason why so many of  
25 them have been unable to attend

1       hearings like this and speak their  
2       minds.

3                       That being said, services  
4       such as PRT's current routes are  
5       several pieces of the puzzle to achieve  
6       collective prosperity. That puzzle of  
7       the good life could be shattered by  
8       PRT's proposed cuts. The proposed cuts  
9       have the potential to eliminate public  
10      transit service altogether, worsening  
11      living conditions for everyone in  
12      Allegheny County. These simultaneous  
13      route reductions and fare increases  
14      will lead to condensed demand for the  
15      remaining lines, and less efficient  
16      service, leading to fewer people  
17      believing that they can adequately use  
18      public transit.

19                      In the short term, former  
20      transit commuters may turn to cars for  
21      commuting, if they can afford ownership  
22      and maintenance of cars, and increase  
23      traffic on car based infrastructure,  
24      such as highways. This would increase  
25      travel times for those who already

1     utilize roads, and increase car related  
2     pollution such as smog, tire debris and  
3     noise pollution.

4             In the long term, the  
5     perceived inefficiency, loss of  
6     interest, and increased frustration may  
7     lead to additional cuts and could be a  
8     slippery slope to elimination of PRT  
9     and other forms of public transit in  
10    Pittsburgh and all of Allegheny County.  
11    This is especially critical for those  
12    unable to drive.

13            Previously, I've never  
14    heard of ACCESS, but I've learned of  
15    its importance immediately after  
16    speaking with a fellow passenger. It  
17    is a necessary service to ensure that  
18    those with physical impediments can  
19    access other areas of Pittsburgh.  
20    Without it, engagement with society,  
21    governance, and their life in Allegheny  
22    County will be intensely more difficult  
23    for them. They will lose the agency to  
24    make Pittsburgh the most livable city  
25    in the country.

1                   Consider the alternatives  
2                   presented today, and in prior hearings.  
3                   Hearings at minimum, mitigating the  
4                   proposed cuts is more logical than the  
5                   elimination of a public service that  
6                   thousands of people utilize every day.  
7                   Doing so would ensure the Pittsburgh  
8                   metropolitan area can live up to one of  
9                   its latest and greatest designations as  
10                  one of the most livable metropolitan  
11                  areas in the country, not only just for  
12                  young incoming professionals, but for  
13                  all. Thank you for listening.

14                   MR. GASIOR:

15                   The next speaker we have  
16                  is Elizabeth Burton.

17                   MS. BURTON:

18                   Hello. Thank you for  
19                  being here this afternoon. My name is  
20                  Liz Burton. That is LIZ BURTON. I'm  
21                  from --- I live in Carnegie, zip code  
22                  15106, and I take the G2 down the west  
23                  busway every day and every evening to  
24                  and from work.

25                   But I want to remind you,

1 I want to ask some of you to remember a  
2 song from childhood. The lines are,  
3 briefly, the wheels on the bus go round  
4 and round, round and round, round and  
5 round, all through the town. And those  
6 wheels need grease. Priority grease  
7 right now, not as an afterthought of,  
8 oh, people just don't have cars. I  
9 guess we need to throw them some money.  
10 No, it is essential, as you have heard.

11 One of the most  
12 disappointing things I have read and  
13 learned are the cuts to the 28X that  
14 goes to and from the airport. This is  
15 another essential means of  
16 transportation and a means of bringing  
17 people into our city. The cut, when I  
18 was looking at it, it actually suits me  
19 because the 28x still stops in Carnegie  
20 and the bus stops right up to the west  
21 busway, the one that I go to. So I  
22 actually win from that one.

23 But if the cost is  
24 cutting it going downtown where all the  
25 hotels are, if the cost of that is



1       stopping it at 11:00 p.m. when flights  
2       are coming to and from the airport  
3       24/7, that is a loss, and it is not  
4       worth it.

5                       So, I just want to ask  
6       all of you to remember what you've  
7       heard from myself and everyone else  
8       here that spoke today, and keep those  
9       wheels moving through the town and  
10      everywhere. Thank you.

11                   MR. GASIOR:

12                   The next speaker's Amber  
13      Brownstein. Please state your full  
14      name again, and spell it slowly and  
15      clearly for the Court Reporter before  
16      you begin speaking. Thank you.

17                   MS. BROWNSTEIN:

18                   Amber Brownstein, A-M-B-  
19      E-R B-R-O-W-N-S-T-E-I-N. Live in  
20      Swissvale.

21                   So I moved to Pittsburgh  
22      from a small suburban town in New  
23      Jersey. When I turned 17 and I got my  
24      license, it was like my whole world  
25      moved, became so much larger. I didn't

1       have to rely on my parents to take me  
2       everywhere. But I have a friend who  
3       still lives in that town, and she can't  
4       drive. If she wants to go anywhere,  
5       she's at the whims of whether her  
6       parents happen to be in a good mood or  
7       not that day. She can't get a job  
8       because there are none within walking  
9       distance. And she actually does have a  
10      bus that comes there, but it doesn't  
11      run at the hours that would allow her  
12      to work any of the kinds of jobs that  
13      she'd be qualified for, which sounds  
14      kind of familiar with the hours that  
15      we're cutting here.

16                   This means that she's  
17      stuck living with her abusive parents,  
18      socially isolated in a town that she  
19      hates. She can't get a job, she can't  
20      go to school, she can't even go to the  
21      DMV to work on getting her driver's  
22      license. No one should be living like  
23      this. No one should have their  
24      independence and freedom of movement  
25      determined solely by whether or not

1       they're physically, mentally, or  
2       otherwise legally capable and willing  
3       to drive a car because they live in an  
4       area where there's no alternative.

5               I don't want Pittsburgh  
6       to turn into a place where more and  
7       more people find themselves in  
8       situations like this, all because the  
9       system has failed them and created an  
10      environment where they have no feasible  
11      means of transportation because the  
12      buses that they've relied on for so  
13      long are no longer servicing their  
14      neighborhood.

15             And this is coming from  
16      someone who doesn't even use transit  
17      because the closest bus stops are  
18      inaccessible to me, and the service in  
19      my neighborhood is just unreliable.  
20      But I wish it was better because I hate  
21      driving here. Anyone who drives  
22      regularly has probably noticed that  
23      everything about it is getting worse.  
24      The drivers are more distracted, more  
25      careless, more aggressive. Traffic is

1 getting worse. I mean, rush hour  
2 starts at three o'clock now.

3 And the roads are also  
4 always closed because we're constantly  
5 trying to play catch up with the never  
6 ending repairs. It feels like every  
7 other time I get in my car, I end up  
8 witnessing a narrowly avoided accident  
9 at some point during the trip,  
10 oftentimes more than just once. The  
11 thought of even more cars on the road  
12 with drivers who would rather be taking  
13 any other mode of transportation if  
14 they had the option? I don't know how  
15 we're going to manage it.

16 If people who don't own  
17 cars have to pay to maintain the roads  
18 that they can't even use, then why  
19 can't we find the money to fund a  
20 public service that's available to  
21 everyone? What is going to happen when  
22 people lose their jobs because their  
23 only means of transportation is gone?

24 These cuts are going to  
25 be the beginning of the end for PRT.

1       The Pittsburgh we will become after  
2       these cuts is going to be  
3       unrecognizable from the livable  
4       Pittsburgh that we have worked so hard  
5       to foster, and I'm sure that plenty of  
6       people are not planning on sticking  
7       around to see just how bad it gets.  
8       Thank you.

9                       MR. GASIOR:

10                      Next --- next speaker we  
11       have is Sean Green.   Sean Green.

12                      MR. GREEN:

13                      My name is Sean Green,  
14       15235.

15                      Again, if --- if I lose  
16       my ACCESS, I won't be able to go  
17       anywhere because I --- I wouldn't ---  
18       because --- because where I live I do  
19       not have. I need my ACCESS because I  
20       --- I, because they want me to go catch  
21       the Port Authority, which is down and  
22       across from Alcoma. And I wouldn't be  
23       able to do that. And I --- and I use  
24       ACCESS so many times a night, and I go  
25       so many different places. Like I go to

1       Wexford, downtown Pittsburgh for CLL,  
2       for my activities, and --- and I do not  
3       want my ACCESS to be cut because ---  
4       because I would be stuck. And I'm not  
5       the only one in wheelchairs that are  
6       speaking for --- for people that are in  
7       wheelchairs that are --- that are not  
8       able to get out.

9               Because I, last year, I  
10       was supposed to go from. I wanted to  
11       go to Fun for All, which was in  
12       Cranberry Township, but --- but I found  
13       out that ACCESS would take me half ---  
14       half the distance of where I had to go.  
15       But, and I would have to catch another,  
16       Westmoreland County or Butler Transit.  
17       And I need ACCESS to go out, get around  
18       other places.

19               And I would really like  
20       my ACCESS to be the same because I  
21       don't know what the fare service, I  
22       don't know what the tickets would cost  
23       now because it's \$7.25, but I don't  
24       know what it will go up to. Thank you  
25       very much.

1                   MR. GASIOR:

2                   The next speaker is  
3                   Charlotte Ford. You have three minutes  
4                   for your public comment. To help the  
5                   Court Reporter, please state your full  
6                   name again, and spell it slowly,  
7                   clearly before you begin speaking.  
8                   Thank you.

9                   MS. FORD:

10                  Hi there. Charlotte  
11                  Ford, C-H-A-R-L-O-T-T-E F-O-R-D.

12                  I live in Mount Lebanon,  
13                  and I've been working downtown for 30  
14                  years and taking public transportation  
15                  exclusively to get to work. Currently  
16                  I take the 36, Banksville. But I've  
17                  lived in a variety of neighborhoods  
18                  north and east of the city. And the  
19                  commonality has always been public  
20                  transportation. That's, you know, what  
21                  I've always looked for in, you know, in  
22                  the neighborhoods I've lived in. It's  
23                  very valuable to me.

24                  In the spring of 1992, I  
25                  was a college student in Oakland, and

1        had a job interview for the summer at a  
2        bank that's long, long gone downtown.  
3        But the one problem was the buses were  
4        on strike. And I had to take a taxi,  
5        which was pretty expensive for a  
6        college student. Back then, Pittsburgh  
7        taxis were not very reliable. I was  
8        late for the interview. I broke down  
9        in tears, and didn't get the job.

10                But, you know, at the  
11        moment I realized, you know, how much I  
12        needed public transportation if I  
13        wanted to pursue my career in banking  
14        and remain in this city. I'm not  
15        native from here. I went to Pitt, and  
16        I chose to stay here for --- for my  
17        job. And a critical part of that has  
18        always been being able to get there.

19                You know, but on the  
20        weekends I, you know, I would have a  
21        chance to drive around the  
22        neighborhoods. It's not an easy city  
23        to navigate. And before GPS, it was a  
24        challenge driving around. But the one  
25        thing that I always relied on were



1       those blue signs, those bus stops. It  
2       always told me, you know, that's the  
3       way home. You know, I knew I was near  
4       where I wanted to be seeing those  
5       signs, very meaningful.

6                       So, you know, my --- my  
7       concern with the 41 and the 36, you  
8       know, I realize I'm privileged being in  
9       Mount Lebanon with the trolley and, you  
10      know, but I have concerns for my  
11      neighbors who are elderly or disabled,  
12      who live on streets that are not  
13      accessible or easy to get to, to the  
14      trolley. We --- we pride ourselves  
15      with being a very walkable community.  
16      And, you know, we've seen a lot of  
17      vehicles more so than ever. And, you  
18      know, I think we need to get to a place  
19      with less cars. You know, that's  
20      really what I advocate for in my  
21      community.

22                      You know, again, with  
23      what Mount Lebanon has to offer, I  
24      mean, we could consider some subsidies,  
25      you know, coming from a neighborhood

1     like mine, you know, to service, you  
2     know, for the better good. So, I just  
3     wanted to express my concern, you know,  
4     for me to still continue to work  
5     downtown, which I love to do, and I  
6     love riding the bus. So I hope ---  
7     hope it sticks around. Thank you.

8                   MR. GASIOR:

9                   Next speaker's Roxanne  
10                  Huber.

11                   MS. HUBER:

12                   Three minutes, say my  
13                  name, spell it. Got it.

14                   So hi, my name's Roxanne  
15                  Huber, R-O-X-A-N-N-E H-U-B-E-R. So the  
16                  last time I came here, I was speaking  
17                  on behalf of four clinics treating out  
18                  probation, CYF. This time, I'm  
19                  actually coming on my own agenda. So  
20                  it's going to be more me centric. I am  
21                  a Sagittarius, so I am going to  
22                  sprinkle a little bit of fiery  
23                  community components in that end as  
24                  well.

25                   So, on top of working

1 full time in forensic psych, I also am  
2 a full time student at Carlow  
3 University. So there are a lot of  
4 reasons why I love public transit and  
5 how it does really well for me. For  
6 example, for me to have a monthly bus  
7 pass during the summer, because Carlow  
8 gives really good discounts on that,  
9 and gas, it is \$130 a month. If I were  
10 to use my car for parking and gas  
11 alone, and parking's only for work,  
12 it's \$250, almost double immediately  
13 right there. If you look at society,  
14 people who don't have cars and utilize  
15 buses only save about \$10,000 a year  
16 that goes into the community.

17 For me, this is really  
18 good for my mental health as well.  
19 Pittsburgh, as we know, is the most  
20 confusing city in the country to drive  
21 in, which means if we're using public  
22 transit, it's causing less stress,  
23 happier people. We're not driving and  
24 when we're on our way to and from work,  
25 we can focus on thinking about these

1 things and processing our day so we're  
2 able to be more productive at home.  
3 For me, that's being a grad student and  
4 being able to focus on my studies  
5 instead of being stressed about a whole  
6 car ride.

7 On the other component,  
8 the whole PRT crisis has been causing  
9 stress because house prices are going  
10 up. I have to move, also because my  
11 housing is not really that great. I'm  
12 struggling just to find where a good  
13 place to live would be because I don't  
14 know what buses are going to get cut  
15 because we don't know what the budget  
16 looks like. So in turn, that's not  
17 going to be known until after I move.  
18 That makes me have a lot more variables  
19 and put me in much more vulnerable  
20 situations in that capacity.

21 The other component of my  
22 mental health, if I do drive in the  
23 most confusing city in the country, I'm  
24 going to be more anxious, more  
25 stressed, and I get road ragey, if I'm

1 very honest. That means there's more  
2 car accidents. Ninety (90) percent of  
3 all car accidents are by private  
4 vehicles and not buses. I think it's,  
5 like, less than ten percent, five to  
6 nine percent, something of that  
7 component when I did my research.  
8 Thank you.

9 Roads are going to be  
10 safer with less vehicles in that  
11 component. Also, for me, it is a  
12 spiritual practice to take the bus, and  
13 it also is better for the environment  
14 for us to use the buses. We are 90  
15 seconds to midnight on a doomsday  
16 clock.

17 Unfortunately, as much as  
18 we all love PRT and we love public  
19 transit here, we cannot trust our  
20 government to save our buses and back  
21 them. That's where you guys come in.  
22 I know you guys are trying to do the  
23 things, but I do challenge you to think  
24 creatively. Some things that I've  
25 thought about since the last time I was

1 up here, I don't know that you guys  
2 have thought about it, is talking with  
3 the city on figuring out ways to  
4 encourage bus drivers because that's  
5 also going to increase more jobs and  
6 reduce accidents, such as reducing  
7 street parking. Making the cost of  
8 permits to park more expensive. I know  
9 cars are very good as well. So in that  
10 component, I know that's like a  
11 temperamental thing.

12 But also just --- okay,  
13 thank you.

14 MR. GASIOR:

15 Next up, we have Kim  
16 Jackson.

17 MS. JACKSON:

18 Good evening to  
19 everybody. Thank you for coming here.  
20 My name is Kim Jackson, K-I-M J-A-C-K-  
21 S-O-N.

22 My mom lived in the  
23 Sheraden neighborhood. You're talking  
24 about cutting out the 26 bus route.  
25 There's also a lot of seniors, and it's

1 right up the street from Lakeland  
2 Elementary School. A lot of them  
3 seniors can't make it down to the bus  
4 stop. There's rollators, those that  
5 are on wheelchairs, and those that's on  
6 canes or whatever else their mobility  
7 may be.

8 I also take care of my  
9 mom. I go shopping for her. And when  
10 you go out to Grafton, that's the easy  
11 bus stop to get up the hill. You got  
12 to walk up a hill, and then around.  
13 I'm also a train rider. I work in  
14 Bethel Park, and I've been dealing with  
15 the trains for the last past two years  
16 and some change. And I'm from here,  
17 and I have a different state accent and  
18 living in New York.

19 A lot of times when you  
20 had storm repairs, we had at least  
21 three weeks' notice. Don't get me  
22 wrong, things don't happen overnight.  
23 A lot of people don't watch the news or  
24 read the paper. A lot of people's on  
25 social media. If you can tell them

1       about a car accident, I'm quite sure  
2       you can let us know.

3                       I had an incident that  
4       happened. I've been on a broke down  
5       train. I've been on the, waiting on  
6       the train at Washington Junction. Had  
7       to wait an hour. Didn't know there was  
8       a fire power line happened until the  
9       next day. And when I got to South  
10      Hills Junction, I had to catch a  
11      shuttle bus to First Avenue train.  
12      Took over half an hour, and I ended up  
13      walking. Don't get me wrong, I love  
14      exercising.

15                     But what about those who  
16      don't know? And your coworkers, RTA  
17      buses, transit, those who work in the  
18      booth or what have you, they constantly  
19      get yelled at because you all don't  
20      notify them. And how you going to help  
21      us move around in transportation if you  
22      don't let them know?

23                     And my other thing is I  
24      used to live here before when it was  
25      packed bus, and there was a lot of



1 buses everywhere. And now, it's not  
2 too many buses, and I just feel bad for  
3 those who already came before me, who  
4 already spoke. But as a consumer and  
5 taking care of my mom, that if you're  
6 going to have buses, make sure it's  
7 near the senior citizen so they be able  
8 to get up and travel more.

9 Thank you, and have a  
10 blessed evening.

11 MR. GASIOR:

12 Next speaker is Kelda  
13 Gannan. As a reminder, you have three  
14 minutes for public comment. To help  
15 our Court Reporter, please state your  
16 full name again, and spell it slowly  
17 and clearly before you begin speaking.

18 MS. GORMAN:

19 Hello. My name is Kelda  
20 Gorman, K-E-L-D-A. Gorman, G-O-R-M-A-  
21 N.

22 Disability is one  
23 minority any of us can join at any  
24 time. Which means that eventually, the  
25 added cuts to access will be compounded

1       even more.    So, and that scares me  
2       because I've been disabled since I was  
3       a baby, and cannot own a driver's  
4       license.

5                   And I'll give you an  
6       example of when I spent four hours on  
7       an ACCESS vehicle, just to have the  
8       medics take me off of it because of all  
9       the stress and being on there and  
10      seizing and falling out of my  
11      wheelchair.   It's a mess and a half.  
12      We can't keep doing this to people.

13                   That being said, I am not  
14      encouraged by the progression that I've  
15      seen with Harrisburg, PRT, any of that.  
16      And instead, I see it getting worse  
17      rather than better.   And I want you  
18      guys to think about the possibility  
19      that most of us will one day be there.  
20      Where we rely on those lines, period.

21                   We shouldn't have to  
22      entertain and make a plan or an exit  
23      plan every day we wake up.   Pretty  
24      much, which has been my life for the  
25      past couple of years because of all

1       these cuts. And now it's to the point  
2       where I'm looking at pretty much every  
3       other city in the country besides  
4       living here because of how limiting the  
5       cuts would make my life.

6               So I encourage you guys  
7       to think about the potential that  
8       you'll be there. Everybody may one day  
9       be there, and what that means for  
10      society and how we function as a state  
11      and a city. Thank you.

12              MR. GASIOR:

13              Next up, we have Jewharu  
14      Williams. Please state your name  
15      again, and spell it clearly and slowly  
16      before you begin speaking. Thank you.

17              MS. WILLIAMS:

18              Hello, my name is  
19      Jewharu. It's J-E-W-H-A-R-U W-I-L-L-I-  
20      A-M-S.

21              I live in Pittsburgh. I  
22      went to one of these meetings before.  
23      It was for the 44 bus, and in Bellevue  
24      (phonetic). We had a talk, and I think  
25      they said they were on plan on keeping

1 the 44 in by April, this year.

2 And when I'd seen it  
3 wasn't taken out, I was elated. I  
4 think most of my folks in the  
5 neighborhood were also happy, until  
6 this meeting. And I realized that it's  
7 a major reduction on the 44. And one  
8 of the biggest problems were that bus  
9 was that there was a lot of wait times.  
10 And this only doesn't help that it's  
11 reduced even more. It's that the wait  
12 times are increased. So, it just makes  
13 me think of the people that live there  
14 and the hopes out there that it was  
15 still available for --- for everyone  
16 around that neighborhood to now being  
17 reduced.

18 And just overall, how  
19 that might affect people who are kind  
20 of outside of Allegheny and how they  
21 might consider, like, what everyone  
22 else is saying about leaving or how  
23 would that actually affect them living  
24 in the city or around it?

25 And I think someone said

1 to me car insurance was, like, the main  
2 thing. Because trying to afford a car,  
3 let alone even get a license, that's  
4 going to be one of the most hardest  
5 things to fulfill. In the, just in  
6 general.

7 And I know for me, I kind  
8 of rely on PRT, especially my work is  
9 that I'm a traveling tutor essentially,  
10 and I have to go, like, to Timbuktu to  
11 just try to help children or whoever  
12 actually needs my help. And my, again,  
13 PRT is my main way of getting there.  
14 So if --- if this is reduced to maybe  
15 limit it just in the city, I might be  
16 out of the job depending, or if I need  
17 to actually drive and whatnot. And  
18 just want to point that out and  
19 consider those ideas, you know, what  
20 that might be for not just me, for  
21 other people also. So, thank you.

22 MR. GASIOR:

23 Next speaker is Chavaysha  
24 Chaney. Again, please state your full  
25 name, and spell it clearly and slowly

1 for the Court Reporter before you begin  
2 speaking. Thank you.

3 MS. CHANEY:

4 Thank Hello. My name is  
5 Chavaysha Chaney, C-H-A-V-A-Y-S-H-A.  
6 Last name is Chaney, C-H-A-N-E-Y.

7 Hello, everyone. My name  
8 is Chavaysha Chaney. I am a Water  
9 Equity Director at Upstream Pittsburgh,  
10 and a proud resident of Wilkinsburg.  
11 And I'm here today to voice strong  
12 support for Pittsburgh PRT, and  
13 emphasize the urgent need for increased  
14 sustainable transit funding in  
15 Pennsylvania. And while I speak on  
16 behalf of an environmental nonprofit, I  
17 also speak as a neighbor, a friend, and  
18 a resident who sees every day how  
19 essential public transportation is to  
20 the people around me.

21 For many of us, it's not  
22 about convenience. It's about  
23 mobility, safety, security, and the  
24 fundamental right to move freely and  
25 access opportunities. Cuts to public

1 transit funding aren't just disruptive.  
2 They're destabilizing. They create  
3 barriers to work, health care, grocery,  
4 community life. They are also harm ---  
5 it's also harmful to our environment  
6 health, and undermines our local  
7 economies.

8 Public transit is not a  
9 luxury infrastructure for life. It's a  
10 bridge that connects us to  
11 opportunities and each other. A  
12 thriving community, especially one in  
13 Wilkinsburg, relies on the  
14 interconnected. We need to be able to  
15 reach other neighbors to meet new  
16 people, access resources, reduce our  
17 environmental impact by choosing  
18 transit over cars. This is how we  
19 build a future that is equitable and  
20 sustainable.

21 These proposed cuts would  
22 devastate not just riders, but all of  
23 us without reliable transit. More  
24 workers will struggle to get jobs.  
25 More students will lose access to

1 education, more patients will miss  
2 critical health care. Local businesses  
3 will face hiring challenges and fewer  
4 customers.

5 We cannot afford to let  
6 this happen, so I urge lawmakers in  
7 Harrisburg to support this legislative  
8 action that guarantees long term  
9 sustainability transit funding, not  
10 just to maintain the current system,  
11 but to build one that works for  
12 everyone. Because public transit is  
13 not just about getting from one place  
14 to another. It's about moving all of  
15 us forward. Thank you.

16 MR. GASIOR:

17 Next speaker Joaquin CB.  
18 Please state your full name again, and  
19 spell it for the record. Thank you.

20 MR. CB:

21 Cool, hi. My name is  
22 Joaquin CB, initials --- J-O-A-Q-U-I-N  
23 and initials C and B.

24 Good afternoon. I would  
25 like to speak on two topics, the 28X



1 route and preserving collective memory.  
2 First, as you know, the 28x carries PRT  
3 riders to Pittsburgh's International  
4 Airport, where a new terminal boasting  
5 improved efficiency and access is about  
6 to open. It's quite ironic then that  
7 the route bringing people to this new  
8 terminal is planned to face reductions  
9 in operating times and range.

10 I will admit that I am a  
11 somewhat frequent rider --- rider of  
12 this route, so there is a bit of  
13 selfishness in this testimony.  
14 However, I am most concerned about  
15 those who use this route not for  
16 travel, but for their livelihood.

17 Being able to take this  
18 bus enables many airport employees to  
19 avoid the burden of car ownership and  
20 expensive rideshares whose prices often  
21 begin at ten times a bus fare.  
22 Reducing operating times represents a  
23 devastating blow to these employees  
24 whose hours often begin extremely early  
25 in the morning, and end late at night.

1 Similarly, employees of Robinson Town  
2 Centre businesses will suffer. That's  
3 along the way.

4 Additionally, ending  
5 service at Carnegie will add a transfer  
6 for many riders, further exacerbating  
7 inflexibility and the difficulty of  
8 commutes. Perhaps then, there might be  
9 a way to negotiate with the airport and  
10 with Robinson Town Centre businesses to  
11 support the preservation of service for  
12 the sake of the workers that enable  
13 their success.

14 At very last --- at the  
15 very least, I request that 28X reach  
16 downtown as opposed to its current  
17 terminus at East Liberty or proposed  
18 terminus in Carnegie, so that 28X  
19 riders can transfer to the many other  
20 routes that congregate downtown.

21 Next, I'd like to speak  
22 about preserving collective memory.  
23 Wait a second. In this current  
24 political climate, I'm not going to  
25 hold my breath waiting for a miracle

1 funding package. I expect that there  
2 will be cuts, as there have been many  
3 times before. However, when  
4 researching past cuts, I struggled  
5 somewhat to reconstruct what previous  
6 networks may have looked like.

7 TIMEKEEPER:

8 One minute left.

9 MR. CB:

10 Thank you. Sifting  
11 through unsorted historical schedules,  
12 news articles describing individual  
13 route changes, and lacking a  
14 centralized set of resources, I  
15 couldn't really understand the network  
16 of even ten years ago. Therefore, I'd  
17 like to request something a bit  
18 unusual. After implementing service  
19 reductions, collaborate with local  
20 organizations, municipal teams, or  
21 community groups to ensure that  
22 knowledge of today's network does not  
23 disappear tomorrow.

24 Organize and host system  
25 maps and schedules on publicly

1 accessible resources. Why? I have  
2 hoped that transit funding in  
3 Pittsburgh, and Pennsylvania, may one  
4 grow and --- may one day involve a  
5 growing budget rather than shrinking.  
6 And I feel that helping people remember  
7 and learn about what used to exist can  
8 help inform future planning and  
9 scheduling decisions. Having this  
10 collective knowledge might also inspire  
11 local activists to advocate for service  
12 restorations.

13 In conclusion, please  
14 reconsider the planned reduction of  
15 service to the 28X and please help  
16 communities keep a careful record of  
17 what they've lost and what --- what  
18 they may one day regain. Thank you.

19 MR. GASIOR:

20 Next speaker's Carolyn  
21 Fulwider. Fulwider.

22 MS. FULWIDER:

23 Hello. My name is  
24 Carolyn Fulwider, C-A-R-O-L-Y-N F-U-L-  
25 W-I-D-E-R. And my zip code is 15232.

1                   I in graduate school had  
2                   an internship at an organization called  
3                   IM4Q. For those of you who aren't  
4                   familiar, that stands for Independent  
5                   Monitoring for Quality. What we did  
6                   was that we would interview people,  
7                   we'd survey people who received  
8                   government assistance, people with  
9                   disabilities who received government  
10                  assistance, and asking them basically  
11                  about their quality of life, what's  
12                  going well, what's not going well, what  
13                  can be done to help them.

14                 Very frequently, there  
15                 was an issue of transportation. This  
16                 was --- this was something that was  
17                 frequently brought up, whether it was  
18                 access to the buses or just access to  
19                 any form of transportation at all. A  
20                 lot of people were in the suburbs, for  
21                 example. And I also want to restate  
22                 what's been --- what's been stated  
23                 previously, but that people with  
24                 disabilities, they're already very  
25                 isolated to begin with. We already

1 know this. This is statistic. This is  
2 a pretty well-known statistic.

3 We also know that people  
4 with disabilities are frequently at  
5 higher rates of risk for abuse, and  
6 that is only going to --- that only  
7 increases with isolation. The more  
8 people are isolated, the more likely it  
9 is for people to miss that something is  
10 wrong, that something is off.

11 I had also had an  
12 internship when I was an undergraduate  
13 student at the Women's Center and  
14 Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh. This  
15 was also something that I saw, that  
16 isolation. People who are unable to  
17 access, just getting outside, you know,  
18 transportation, resources, community,  
19 people. People are going to --- people  
20 get hurt when they're unable to  
21 physically access the outside, when  
22 they're unable to physically access  
23 their community, when they're unable to  
24 get outside and just go to the library,  
25 the grocery store, a store in general.

1                   In addition to talking  
2           about stores, cuts like this will just.  
3           That will negatively affect the  
4           economy.

5                   TIMEKEEPER:

6                   One minute left.

7                   MS. FULWIDER:

8                   Thank you.    If people are  
9           unable to go out and spend money and go  
10          to businesses, go to stores, well,  
11          businesses are going to close.   They're  
12          unable to hire people.   It's --- it's  
13          something that is just unacceptable for  
14          these cuts to happen.   Something needs  
15          to be done.   People who are smarter  
16          than I am should be able to figure that  
17          out.   Figure out something.   Be  
18          creative.   Thank you.

19                  MR. GASIOR:

20                  Next speaker is Rich  
21          Jackson.   As a reminder, you have three  
22          minutes for public comment.   To help  
23          our Court Reporter, please state your  
24          full name again, and spell it slowly  
25          and clearly before you begin speaking.

1 Rich Jackson.

2 MR. JACKSON:

3 My name is Rich Jackson,  
4 R-I-C-H J-A-C-K-S-O-N.

5 And I promise you, I'm  
6 not here to fight you. I just wanted  
7 to say one thing, a couple of things  
8 real quick. I just relocated back to  
9 Pittsburgh about five years ago, right  
10 before COVID. Maybe six years. And I  
11 brought my driver's license because I  
12 got this license in 1989. I've driven  
13 exactly six times, excluding the person  
14 from church teaching you how to drive  
15 with a permit. I've only driven six  
16 times because that's how afraid I am of  
17 getting pulled over by the police. I'd  
18 rather get on a bus than risk my life  
19 getting stopped in the middle of the  
20 night. So that's why I do transit.

21 Like I said, I'm not here  
22 to fight you guys, but I wanted to be  
23 known that I'm grateful because ---  
24 especially number one, coming from New  
25 Ken. There's a lot of us, Laurel,



1       Brewer (phonetic), New Ken, Cheswick.  
2       I'm here for all those folks, Tarentum,  
3       Brackenridge.

4                   And all these folks here,  
5       they're representing? They're not from  
6       New Ken. So only thing I can ask you  
7       guys is that just please remember, I  
8       know you guys got stuff to do. Please  
9       remember that their lives matter. You  
10      know, I don't know how many of you  
11      folks get to transit every day, but you  
12      see people on the sidewalks and  
13      everything. They have beds, they have  
14      kids and stuff. Their lives matter. I  
15      know you're doing the best you can,  
16      guys. Just like I said, I'm not here  
17      to fight you. But just --- just be  
18      cognizant. I know you are, but you  
19      know, when we see the people on the  
20      street, there's a reason. I trust Pat  
21      Transit, and I will always call it Pat  
22      Transit.

23                   Lastly, the only thing  
24      I'd like to say is to --- to the  
25      director, Ms. Kellerman (sic). I read

1       about you when you got your post, and I  
2       thought, wow, okay. Here's someone who  
3       came up from Texas, and she actually,  
4       you know, seems to be, like, one of us.  
5       You know, you went to the park and  
6       ride. You were riding the bus. I've  
7       tried to contact you. I tried to  
8       contact you to get a meeting with you  
9       five times over the past two years,  
10      okay? And it wasn't to complain. I  
11      needed your help.

12                   And then the one lady  
13      told me that, well, you can't get to  
14      see her. You're not allowed. And I  
15      said, well, can I at least drop off a  
16      letter? I typed up a letter, or  
17      handwritten it actually. Put my name  
18      and address, and dropped it off, and  
19      --- and I heard nothing. I created a  
20      global education initiative, and I'm  
21      hoping that they take it nationally for  
22      the first five years then globally  
23      after that.

24                   I needed your help for  
25      just 15 minutes, and I couldn't get it.

1 Just be there for people. That's ---  
2 just be there for them. I know you're  
3 trying your best, guys. I know it.  
4 You're under budget restraints, but  
5 just be there for people. Not  
6 everybody who wants a meeting with you  
7 is going to waste your time. I promise  
8 you that.

9 MS. KELLEMAN:

10 Well so, Mr. Jackson, do  
11 you have a pen?

12 MR. JACKSON:

13 Yes, I do.

14 MS. KELLEMAN:

15 Okay.

16 Well, I'll give you my  
17 card, but first it's K-E-K. Anyone can  
18 write it down, anyone who wants it,  
19 kek@rideprt.org. That's my email

20 MR. JACKSON:

21 .org?

22 MS. KELLEMAN:

23 Yep.

24 MR. JACKSON:

25 So that's K-E-K?

1                   MS. KELLEMAN:

2                   Uh-huh, K-E-K, Katherine  
3                   E. Kelleman @rideprt.org. Got your pen  
4                   still?

5                   MS. KELLEMAN:

6                   Uh-huh.

7                   MR. JACKSON:

8                   412-337-0116. That's my  
9                   cell number.

10                  MR. JACKSON:

11                  And I wasn't ---.

12                  MS. KELLEMAN:

13                  I'll --- Ms. Kim, 412.  
14                  Okay, Darcy will get it for you. But  
15                  you --- if, when you text me, tell me  
16                  who you are.

17                  MR. JACKSON:

18                  I really needed your  
19                  help. I wasn't trying to.

20                  MS. KELLEMAN:

21                  That's okay, we're best  
22                  friends now. So we'll --- well, I'll  
23                  talk to you after the hearing.

24                  Okay?

25                  MR. JACKSON:

1                   Good luck, guys. And ---  
2                   and I know you got a tough job to do,  
3                   but just remember, these people,  
4                   they're real people. So, just do the  
5                   best you can. That's all any of us can  
6                   ask.

7                   MR. GASIOR:

8                   Next speaker is Taima  
9                   Ross. Please state your full name  
10                  again, and spell it slowly and clearly  
11                  before you begin speaking. Thank you.

12                  MS. ROSS:

13                  Hey, good evening. My  
14                  name is Taima Ross. First name spelled  
15                  T-A-I-M-A. Last name's R-O-S-S. I  
16                  currently live in Bloomfield, zip code  
17                  15224.

18                  So I actually wasn't  
19                  originally planning to speak tonight.  
20                  I was here to support a couple friends  
21                  of mine, and also all of my neighbors  
22                  here today. But after hearing some  
23                  testimony, I thought that I --- I  
24                  should speak. Not only because I am a  
25                  PRT rider, but also because of my work

1 with advocacy and also another  
2 conservation nonprofit in Point Breeze.  
3 And so, we do job training and  
4 conservation work.

5 And I couldn't help but  
6 hear all of the overlap, and all of the  
7 similarities, and how all of these  
8 items that would affect people with  
9 these cuts are related. And so, one of  
10 the absolute, major barriers that we  
11 have seen across very different sectors  
12 in my nonprofit work has been  
13 transportation. Usually housing and  
14 transportation are tied. And so, it's  
15 a fundamental need for folks to be able  
16 to seek out employment, to be able to  
17 access food in areas that may not have  
18 equitable access to grocery stores, and  
19 also just to be able to take part in  
20 their community.

21 And so, my very first  
22 office job here in Pittsburgh was in  
23 Uptown. It was for the Center for  
24 Hearing and Deaf Services. And so, one  
25 of the major things that we saw was

1       that people required their ability to  
2       use ACCESS, to be able to basically  
3       participate as a member of the city.  
4       And so, we had a sort of summer camp  
5       for folks with intellectual  
6       disabilities who were also deaf on the  
7       heels of the lockdown of the pandemic.  
8       And so, hearing their stories of not  
9       being able to communicate with anyone  
10      for months was truly heartbreaking.  
11      And so, just knowing that we would see  
12      their smiling faces every day stepping  
13      off that ACCESS bus was enormous.

14                   In another job of mine,  
15      we would work with folks who were  
16      English language learners, often  
17      immigrants or refugees. And their  
18      first stop in the US was Pittsburgh, a  
19      particularly confusing, if not  
20      colorful, first stop.

21                   TIMEKEEPER:

22                   One minute left.

23                   MS. ROSS:

24                   Thank you. And so, it  
25      was a huge joy to be able to help

1 people figure out how to navigate the  
2 city and to bridge that connection with  
3 communities, and to have people realize  
4 that, you know, they can access  
5 libraries and further be able to invest  
6 in their education, not only broadly,  
7 but just for the English language with  
8 access to the bus.

9 In addition, I currently  
10 have a vehicle because I need one for  
11 my job. I took the bus here today, and  
12 I know that a lot of people require  
13 that sort of access to be able to be  
14 functioning members of the city. Job  
15 training, helping people access things  
16 like transportation through SNAP  
17 initiatives, helping people access  
18 transportation through these workforce  
19 development programs. It's all  
20 connected. So if there's a worker  
21 shortage, then cutting major bus lines  
22 is certainly going to exacerbate  
23 already huge issues that --- thanks so  
24 much.

25 MR. GASIOR:



1                   Our next --- next speaker  
2                   is Ross Nicotero. Please state your  
3                   name again, and spell it clearly for  
4                   the Court Reporter. Thank you.

5                   MR. NICOTERO:

6                   Absolutely. Good  
7                   evening, everybody. Ross, like the  
8                   garage that's closing, R-O-S-S.  
9                   Vincent, V. as in Vincent, Nicotero,  
10                  and I'm the Third.

11                  First off, I'd like to  
12                  thank all of you for letting me address  
13                  you this evening. Good evening. My  
14                  name is Ross Nicotero. I'm the  
15                  President Business Agent of local 85  
16                  here in Pittsburgh. I represent 2,200  
17                  members, the SDA department, claims  
18                  department, first level supervisors,  
19                  and mechanics, but most importantly,  
20                  operators. I am also the Chairman of  
21                  the Pennsylvania Joint Conference Board  
22                  that also represents 17 other transit  
23                  agencies throughout this Commonwealth.

24                  These ATU properties  
25                  stretch from Erie, Westmoreland County,

1 New Castle, Scranton, Allentown,  
2 Bethlehem, Reading, Wilkes-Barre,  
3 Harrisburg, Johnstown, Williamsport,  
4 Altoona, Veneta, and Lancaster. While  
5 these properties vary in size, we all  
6 have something in common. Every one of  
7 these locations need dedicated funding  
8 for mass transit.

9 This isn't a Pittsburgh  
10 problem or a Philadelphia problem.  
11 This is a Commonwealth of PA and a  
12 national problem. I want everybody  
13 here to know that ATU Local 85 and all  
14 the members of the PA Joint Conference  
15 Board wholeheartedly endorse Governor  
16 Shapiro's efforts to fund mass transit  
17 throughout the Commonwealth, and  
18 especially here in Allegheny County.

19 Over the past year and a  
20 half, my leadership team and myself  
21 have made countless trips to  
22 Harrisburg, including one earlier this  
23 week. We met with many legislators and  
24 leaders, including Lieutenant Governor  
25 Austin Davis, who uniquely has a

1 personal interest here since his father  
2 is one of my local 85 operators. We're  
3 all pushing for dedicated transit  
4 funding throughout the Commonwealth  
5 that adjusts with inflation for many  
6 years so all of us do not have to keep  
7 lobbying year by year for band aids,  
8 flexes, or stopgaps.

9 I'm sure you've heard  
10 from many people speaking before me,  
11 and after me, to convey how the transit  
12 cuts will affect them personally.  
13 Unfortunately, some people think mass  
14 transit's only for the poor and  
15 impoverished. This is simply false.  
16 While it is true most of our ridership  
17 are for people that don't own cars  
18 today, some reality people choose not  
19 to own cars for various reasons. Car  
20 maintenance, convenience. Transit is  
21 vital to the restaurant and service  
22 industry. For nightlife. Every  
23 business relies on moving large amounts  
24 of people safely and efficiently,  
25 especially here to the North Shore and

1 to the south side.

2 Transit gets people to  
3 work, students to schools, helps our  
4 seniors get to doctor's appointments,  
5 pharmacies, and grocery stores. The  
6 ACCESS program here gets seniors and  
7 people with special needs to their  
8 dialysis appointments, and to healthy  
9 --- health care appointments regularly.

10 For every bus on the  
11 road, it removes 40 cars, which means  
12 fewer traffic jams, cleaner air, and a  
13 better quality of life for everybody.

14 Public transit isn't a  
15 burden, it's an economic engine.  
16 Everyone here knows how these draconian  
17 cuts would affect the constituents of  
18 Allegheny County. Forty-one (41) of  
19 our 100 routes would be eliminated in  
20 its entirety, the other 59 seeing  
21 drastic cuts as far as trips and  
22 headway time. The Ross and Collier  
23 divisions being closed, the Silver Line  
24 being abolished, no service after 11:00  
25 p.m. Limited weekend service. No

1 special transportation for the  
2 Steelers, Pirates, Penguins, or any  
3 other concert or large events. The  
4 fare increase from \$2.75 to \$3 will be  
5 one of the highest in the nation.  
6 Nineteen (19) municipalities in  
7 Allegheny County would not have any  
8 access to any bus whatsoever.

9 But most importantly,  
10 what I care about most, hundreds of  
11 good union jobs will be lost. This  
12 cannot be allowed to happen for various  
13 reasons. As I stand here and speak  
14 now, the US Open's going on in Oakmont  
15 and Harmar. We decimated that in 2011.  
16 Next year, the NFL draft will be here  
17 60 days before my contract expires.

18 Our friends to the east  
19 and SEPTA, the World Cup of Soccer,  
20 Major League Baseball All Star Game,  
21 and the 250th anniversary of the  
22 Declaration of Independence. We have  
23 many celebrity --- many events that  
24 will need transit next year.

25 In closing, if our

1 funding needs go unfilled and the  
2 proverbial axe begins to swing, it's  
3 imperative all parties must take a  
4 look, and do an accounting. Simply  
5 put, labor, my members, will not be the  
6 sole target of this. Any proposed  
7 cuts, rather, the whole mission will be  
8 held accountable. Just not the little  
9 guy. If we succeed, we succeed  
10 together. If we don't, we must all  
11 look inward. Tuesday, June 30th will  
12 be problematic for everybody involved.

13 Once again, I thank you  
14 for the opportunity for my comments,  
15 and I look forward to working with you  
16 with the critical situations ahead.  
17 Thank you.

18 MR. GASIOR:

19 The next, the last and  
20 final speaker, remaining speaker  
21 registered tonight is Jared Helfer.

22 MR. HELFER:

23 How's it going everybody?  
24 Jared Helfer, J-A-R-E-D H-E-L-F-E-R.  
25 Yeah, I do comedy, so I

1        tried to do, like, a kind of a tight  
2        three minutes. So, yeah. Thanks for  
3        all. Thanks for coming again. I went  
4        to the first one and, you know, thank  
5        God there's no, like, insane storm of  
6        the century after the last one. But  
7        it's interesting that that happened  
8        because I mean, I know that the buses  
9        saved lives that day, but like, how  
10       much is a human being worth? If it  
11       saved a hundred lives, what? A million  
12       dollars a person, thousand per ---  
13       thousand people? It's good questions  
14       to ask. I'd --- I'd say infinite, but  
15       you know, I'm no big city lawyer.

16                    I like the bus because it  
17       shows that we share the world with  
18       others. That's a very good thing. You  
19       know, traffic, everyone always goes,  
20       you know, complain about traffic,  
21       everyone goes, you are traffic. No, we  
22       are traffic. We, you know. The city  
23       is a body, and the roads are arteries.  
24       We all know what happens when we clog  
25       our arteries. The reason why the city

1 can put fries on salad is because we  
2 have world class health care. You know  
3 what I mean?

4 We're also the City of  
5 Mr. Rogers, Jonas Salk, and Nellie Bly.  
6 I think if this passes, we could tear  
7 down those statues, put up a tin bust  
8 of Henry Ford holding a diesel gas can,  
9 covered in head toe and leaded paint.

10 What else do I got? I  
11 --- also, this needs to happen. It's  
12 not, like, this is ridiculous that  
13 we're here, honestly. It has to  
14 happen. Put up funding. Put up, maybe  
15 make a yard sale of all the stuff that  
16 we find on the bus. Sell that. Maybe  
17 raise one gallon of gas one quarter  
18 once. Probably fund the whole entire  
19 thing 50 times over. Oh, yeah.

20 Is anybody Scott Perry  
21 here? Okay, no one's Scott Perry. You  
22 guy --- guys hear that Scott Perry guy?  
23 He's like a Congressman. He --- he's  
24 trying to pass a bill. He wrote a bill  
25 called no desire for streetcars, and



1       who knows? It might actually pass.  
2       Funny, cute name, you know, Streetcar  
3       Named Desire. No Desire for  
4       streetcars. Very funny.

5                   I don't know. All this  
6       kind of has me feeling like Blanche at  
7       the end of Streetcar Named Desire. Has  
8       anybody read that one or seen that one?  
9       It's really good. Yeah, this is ---  
10      this a a rugged pioneerism. He's,  
11      like, all about rugged pioneerism if  
12      you look on his website. I do that  
13      every day I ride the bus. There's no  
14      more rugged pioneerism than riding the  
15      damn bus. And also, is this guy going  
16      to, you know, ride a horse? Am I going  
17      to be allowed to ride a horse? I have  
18      to take the bus.

19                   I'm just saying, wherever  
20      you are, to quote Blanche at the end of  
21      Streetcar Named Desire, wherever you  
22      are, I have always depended on the  
23      kindness of strangers. So I really  
24      appreciate your time. Check out  
25      Streetcar Named Desire. Again, holds

1 up. Thank you for listening.

2 MS. KELLEMAN:

3 Thank you. PRT's records  
4 indicate that there are no more  
5 remaining speakers registered to  
6 provide public comment at this hearing  
7 who have not already provided their  
8 comments or were given the opportunity  
9 to provide their comments. And we are  
10 now at the end of our public ---  
11 publicly advertised time for this  
12 hearing. We will now conclude the  
13 hearing.

14 On behalf of PRT's Board  
15 and staff, thank you everyone who took  
16 the time to participate today and  
17 provide us with your comments regarding  
18 the proposed funding crisis related  
19 fiscal '26 fare increases and service  
20 reductions. It's really important that  
21 you're here. Thank you for taking the  
22 time.

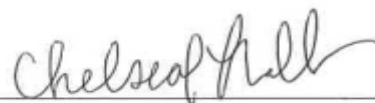
23 \* \* \* \* \*

24 MEETING CONCLUDED AT 7:17 P.M.

25 \* \* \* \* \*

## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.  
Dated the 26th day of June, 2025



Chelsea Noll,

Court Reporter

# Public Hearing 3

**Date: 6/12/2025**

**Location: Convention Center**

**Room: Auxiliary**

**Time: Morning**

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED  
SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND FARE INCREASE  
PUBLIC MEETING

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: James McNeal, Member  
Melissa Rubin, Member  
HEARING: Thursday, June 12, 2025  
9:00 a.m.  
LOCATION: 1000 Fort Duquesne  
Boulevard  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
WITNESSES: Amy Randal, Jheri Spearline

Reporter: Benjamin Morrow  
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## A P P E A R A N C E S

Eddie Phillips, Moderator

Dante Calderone

Pittsburgh Regional Transit

## I N D E X

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES | 5 - 12  |
| TESTIMONY                |         |
| By Amy Randal            | 12 - 15 |
| DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES | 15 - 17 |
| TESTIMONY                |         |
| By Jheri Spearline       | 17 - 20 |
| DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES | 20 - 22 |
| CERTIFICATE              | 23      |

## E X H I B I T S

| <u>Number</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Page<br/>Offered</u> |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
|               | NONE OFFERED       |                         |



## P R O C E E D I N G S

-----

MR. DEVLIN:

Good morning. My name is Jeffrey Devlin, Chief Innovation Officer for Pittsburgh Regional Transit.

PRT is conducting this public hearing as part of a public comment period that began at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, March 31st, 2025 and will conclude on Wednesday, June 18th, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. to receive public input on PRT's proposed funding crisis, related fare increases and service reductions.

Before we begin public comment, our hearing moderator, Eddie Phillips, will go over some housekeeping information. Thank you.

MR. PHILLIPS:

This hearing is being recorded and transcribed by a court reporter. If you do not want to be recorded, please exit the hearing room at this time.

1                   Please note that we have  
2           American Sign Language and Spanish  
3           language interpreters to provide  
4           translation services during the hearing  
5           upon request.

6                   For participants who  
7           registered to provide public comment at  
8           today's hearing, you will be called up  
9           to speak at your designated time,  
10          though you may be called up at as much  
11          as 15 minutes early to speak if there  
12          are no other speakers scheduled to  
13          speak.

14                   For participants who did  
15          not pre register, you've been placed  
16          into an open time slot to speak and  
17          will be called upon to speak at your  
18          designated time, though you may also be  
19          called up as much as 15 minutes early  
20          to speak if there are no other speakers  
21          scheduled to speak.

22                   Each speaker will have  
23          three minutes to provide their public  
24          comment. When called upon, please  
25          clearly state your name and spell it

1 and then speak clearly. The hearing  
2 moderator will alert you when you have  
3 one minute remaining.

4 If your three minutes is  
5 up and you want to provide further  
6 comment, you may do so via telephone,  
7 regular mail or online until 5:00 p.m.  
8 Eastern Standard Time on Wednesday,  
9 June 18th, 2025.

10 Additional details on  
11 these other methods to submit public  
12 comment to PRT regarding the proposed  
13 funding crisis related fiscal year 2026  
14 fare increases and service reductions  
15 is available on PRT's website at  
16 [www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis](http://www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis).

17 Speakers cannot donate or  
18 delegate their allotted time to another  
19 individual interested in speaking, but  
20 speakers may read in written comments  
21 they may have brought with them on  
22 behalf of another individual during  
23 their scheduled comment time.

24 The purpose of this  
25 public hearing is for PRT to receive

1 public comment only. Participating PRT  
2 Board members and/or staff members will  
3 not respond to public comment provided  
4 during this hearing, but all comments  
5 will be recorded and analyzed as part  
6 of the public comment collection  
7 process.

8 Additionally, there is an  
9 information table set up outside the  
10 hearing room where PRT staff can answer  
11 questions.

12 Both PRT Board members  
13 and senior management will be listening  
14 to public comments during this public  
15 hearing. At this time, I would ask PRT  
16 Board member who are in attendance to  
17 identify themselves.

18 I would now ask PRT  
19 senior management who are in attendance  
20 to identify themselves.

21 MR. DEVLIN:

22 Jeffrey Devlin, Chief  
23 Innovation Officer.

24 MR. PHILLIPS:

25 This public hearing was

1 scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
2 and 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with a two  
3 hour break from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
4 PRT intends to conduct a public hearing  
5 for the entire advertised time periods  
6 to ensure members of the public who did  
7 not pre register but appear today and  
8 sign up to speak have an opportunity to  
9 do so.

10 MR. DEVLIN:

11 Thank you, Eddie.

12 Absent additional state  
13 funding, PRT is facing an operating  
14 budget deficit of approximately \$100  
15 million for its fiscal year 2026.

16 PRT is required by law to  
17 pass a balanced budget and with so many  
18 fixed costs, we are proposing a 35  
19 percent reduction in bus, light rail  
20 and incline services. If approved by  
21 PRT's Board, these changes would begin  
22 with PRT's February 2026 service  
23 adjustments along with a 25 cent fare  
24 increase.

25 Additionally, due to the

1 severity of the budget deficit,  
2 corresponding reductions to service  
3 levels and increases in fares are also  
4 proposed for PRT sponsored paratransit  
5 program, ACCESS. This program provides  
6 demand response transportation services  
7 for eligible individuals with  
8 disabilities and senior citizens in  
9 Allegheny County.

10 A summary of the proposed  
11 funding crisis related FY2026 fare  
12 increases and service reductions is  
13 available on PRT's website at  
14 [www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis](http://www.rideprt.org/funding-crisis).

15 We will now begin to  
16 receive public comment.

17 MR. PHILLIPS:

18 So call your name up.

19 Amy Randal.

20 MS. RANDAL:

21 My name is Amy Randal.

22 MR. PHILLIPS:

23 All right. Okay.

24 As a reminder, this  
25 hearing is being recorded and

1 transcribed by a court reporter. So if  
2 you don't want to be recorded, ---

3 MS. RANDAL:

4 That's fine.

5 MR. PHILLIPS:

6 --- you'll have to exit  
7 the room now.

8 MS. RANDAL:

9 No, it's okay.

10 MR. PHILLIPS:

11 Each speaker has up to  
12 three minutes to provide public  
13 comment. And just please speak clearly  
14 and spell your name for the court  
15 reporter. There are instructions on  
16 your table as well.

17 MS. RANDAL:

18 Okay.

19 MR. PHILLIPS:

20 And you'll have three  
21 minutes to speak.

22 MS. RANDAL:

23 Okay.

24 MR. PHILLIPS:

25 And when you begin, I'll

1 start our clock. Okay?

2 MS. RANDAL:

3 Okay. So you'll tell me  
4 when to begin?

5 MR. PHILLIPS:

6 Yes. If you're ready  
7 right now, go right ahead.

8 MS. RANDAL:

9 Okay.

10 Well, my name is Amy  
11 Randal, A-M-Y, R-A-N-D-A-L. My  
12 community is 15205.

13 So today I'm a mental  
14 health professional in Allegheny  
15 County. Twenty five (25) years. I've  
16 witnessed firsthand the need for public  
17 transportation. Because the  
18 individuals that I currently serve, who  
19 in part are with me behind me today,  
20 they are very afraid. And I'm not.  
21 You know why? Because this is not  
22 going to affect me as a human being. I  
23 have a car. I can pay for a car.

24 I'm not here for Amy  
25 Randal. Please know that. Mention



1 that in whatever you're reporting. I  
2 am here as a mental health professional  
3 in Allegheny County for 25 years, a  
4 taxpayer for 37 years, a social service  
5 worker in total in America for 27  
6 years. But in Allegheny County, 25  
7 years is all you got of me.

8 And I have watched my  
9 people not have a bus, a trolley or an  
10 ACCESS ride now, today, in 2025, before  
11 these cuts. That's my issue.

12 These cuts happen, you  
13 know, those buses don't show up and  
14 those trolleys don't show up and the  
15 ACCESSes don't show up in 2025. What  
16 are you going to do on July 1st of 2025  
17 if you choose to cut all of these  
18 services? Please explain to me. And  
19 you can't because this is my turn to  
20 talk. So I'll explain to you. I'll  
21 explain to you what's going to happen.

22 Our county is going to be  
23 in trouble. Our hospitals, our  
24 community service centers, clinics. I  
25 mean, I can name all kinds of mental

1 health sources in Allegheny County  
2 because this is my home. So I'm very  
3 well aware that if this cut happens,  
4 you're not caring about my mentally ill  
5 clients. And that to me is personal  
6 because my purpose is to serve  
7 Allegheny county individuals with a  
8 mental illness.

9 Please do not cut this.  
10 If you cut this, my folks will not be  
11 able to get their medication, their  
12 therapy. And this is life changing.  
13 Like life --- people die from mental  
14 illness, period. My clients don't need  
15 to die.

16 And if PRT keeps at least  
17 a little bit of service that they  
18 manage to do now --- because they don't  
19 manage it very well now. In the 90s,  
20 when I was in college we the best  
21 public transportation system in this  
22 country. Bring that back. And do not  
23 cut this funding because they're going  
24 to hurt, not me. They are.

25 Anything else? How much

1 time do I have?

2 MR. PHILLIPS:

3 You have 15 more seconds.

4 Yeah.

5 MS. RANDAL:

6 Okay.

7 The last thing I think I  
8 want to say is written down right here.  
9 And all it is, you do this, you save  
10 funding, you'll save lives. Thank you  
11 very much. The end.

12 MR. PHILLIPS:

13 Thank you so much.

14 MS. RANDAL:

15 Okay.

16 MR. PHILLIPS:

17 And thank you, everybody,  
18 for coming as well.

19 MS. RANDAL:

20 And now can we - - - do we  
21 just leave?

22 MR. PHILLIPS:

23 Yeah, you can head out  
24 or, you know, like I said, if you want  
25 to go next door and see some of the

1 other testimony or listen in, you're  
2 more than welcome to do that as well.

3 MS. RANDAL:

4 Well, thank you for your  
5 time. What's your name?

6 MR. PHILLIPS:

7 Eddie Phillips.

8 MS. RANDAL:

9 Thank you, Eddie.

10 MR. PHILLIPS:

11 Thank you.

12 MS. RANDAL:

13 I appreciate being heard.

14 - - -

15 (WHEREUPON, A BREAK WAS HELD.)

16 - - -

17 MR. PHILLIPS:

18 Just a reminder this is  
19 public comment too, so we won't be  
20 reacting to the comments or conversing.  
21 Just you'll be able to speak for three  
22 minutes.

23 MS. SPEARLINE:

24 Just talk to you, right?

25 MR. PHILLIPS:

1 Yes, you'll be able to  
2 talk to us. And please say --- there's  
3 instructions on the table. But please  
4 be sure to say your --- state your  
5 name, spell it clearly and then go on  
6 and do your public comment. Okay?

7 So whenever you're ready,  
8 go ahead and begin and I'll start the  
9 three minute timer.

10 MS. SPEARLINE:

11 Okay.

12 My name is Jheri,  
13 J-H-E-R-I, Spearline, S as in Sam, P as  
14 in Paul, E-A-R-L-I-N-E, and I live in  
15 Aetna, 15223 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

16 Well, I'm, you know,  
17 concerned about the bosses as everyone  
18 is. And I live --- being that I live  
19 in Aetna and the to Mont Royal, that is  
20 like the only bus we have. And it goes  
21 through Millvale and you know, into  
22 Downtown and it also goes out to  
23 McKnight Road to all the stores and  
24 everything out there.

25 Now I'm older, I know,

1 but there's - - - everybody, you know,  
2 uses that bus. Kids that are in  
3 college and people that have to go food  
4 shopping. Well, I'm sure you all know  
5 the doctors and everything. There's no  
6 way we can do this, you know.

7 And I also heard that the  
8 12, I think it's 12A, I'm not sure what  
9 that is, but that is going to be  
10 eliminated too. And that goes out to  
11 the North Hills. There'll be no way  
12 for us to go anywhere.

13 And I don't - - - it's not  
14 an entitlement, as I had heard that  
15 been said. It's a necessity. And you  
16 know, I don't know how they can go to  
17 another avenue, another way to get the  
18 money they need or what. But it's very  
19 important that, you know, we have this  
20 transportation.

21 So everybody, you know,  
22 in the town, like I said, there's  
23 nothing in Millvale for quite a few  
24 years. And this bus to my Mount Royal,  
25 it goes through Millville also. So it

1 takes up a lot of --- you know, a lot  
2 of people in different areas. And then  
3 it also goes through the North Side  
4 Downtown. But it also, when it goes  
5 out North Hills, there's a lot of  
6 people on that way.

7 So, you know, I'm just  
8 here to speak on behalf of my  
9 community, you know, Aetna and Millvale  
10 and all around the area.

11 And so I don't know when  
12 --- do you know when this is all going  
13 to be sent to Harrisburg or --- I can't  
14 ask you questions, I'm sorry.

15 Well, anyway, you know, I  
16 hope that I did something. I'm sure  
17 there are many people that are here  
18 doing this today.

19 MR. PHILLIPS:

20 One minute remaining, if  
21 you'd like.

22 MS. SPEARLINE:

23 Okay.

24 Can --- at this --- the  
25 terminal that's down there, the transit

1        thing, can I fill out an application  
2        too or is this an out? They were  
3        saying they had applications.

4                    MR. PHILLIPS:

5                    Oh, yeah. If you wanted  
6        to provide additional public comment.  
7        Yeah. You could do so online or  
8        actually at our registration table too.  
9        They'd probably be able to guide you in  
10      the right direction for that as well.  
11      Yeah.

12                   MS. SPEARLINE:

13                   All right. Thank you so  
14      much. I appreciate that.

15                   MR. PHILLIPS:

16                   Thank you. And to answer  
17      your other question about the budget,  
18      the --- Harrisburg is supposed to pass  
19      it or have something in place by June  
20      30th is their timeline. But sometimes  
21      it goes beyond that. So that was the  
22      timeline.

23                   MS. SPEARLINE:

24                   Well, so many people ---  
25      I mean, doctors and food and everything



1 else. You know, people have to go to  
2 the store. Thank you. God bless you.

3 MR. PHILLIPS:

4 You're welcome.

5 MS. SPEARLINE:

6 Happy Father's Day.

7 PANEL MEMBER:

8 If you have any specific  
9 questions, there are some tables out  
10 front where they can answer - - -.

11 MS. SPEARLINE:

12 Oh, I'm sorry.

13 PANEL MEMBER:

14 No, you're fine. If you  
15 have any specific questions, there are  
16 some tables out front that they can  
17 actually answer questions.

18 MS. SPEARLINE:

19 Thank you. Have a happy  
20 Father's Day too.

21 PANEL MEMBER:

22 And you're welcome to  
23 join in the main group next door.  
24 Thank you.

25 MS. SPEARLINE:

God bless you.

MR. PHILLIPS:

Thank you, have a good  
day.

- - -

(WHEREUPON, A BREAK WAS HELD.)

- - -

PANEL MEMBER:

Is now 1:00 p.m. As  
publicly advertised we will now take a  
break and go off the record from 1:00  
to 3:00 p.m. This public hearing will  
resume at 3:00 p.m. Thank you.

\* \* \* \* \*

MEETING CONCLUDED AT 12:56 P.M.

\* \* \* \* \*

## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.  
Dated the 25th day of June, 2025

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Benjamin Morrow", is written over a horizontal line.

Benjamin Morrow,  
Court Reporter

# Public Hearing 3

**Date: 6/12/2025**

**Location: Convention Center**

**Room: Auxiliary**

**Time: Afternoon**

PITTSBURGH REGIONAL TRANSIT BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED  
SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND FARE INCREASE  
PUBLIC MEETING

\* \* \* \* \*

BEFORE: James McNeal, Member  
Melissa Rubin, Member  
HEARING: Thursday, June 12, 2025  
3:00 p.m.  
LOCATION: 1000 Fort Duquesne  
Boulevard  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
WITNESSES: James Craven, Charnedda  
Wilbon

Reporter: Benjamin Morrow  
Any reproduction of this transcript  
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by the certifying agency.

## A P P E A R A N C E S

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Pittsburgh Regional Transit

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I N D E X

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES | 28 - 30 |
| PUBLIC COMMENT           |         |
| By James Craven          | 30 - 31 |
| DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES | 31 - 33 |
| PUBLIC COMMENT           |         |
| By Charnedda Wilbon      | 33 - 35 |
| DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES | 35 - 36 |
| CERTIFICATE              | 38      |

## E X H I B I T S

| <u>Number</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Page<br/>Offered</u> |
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|               | NONE OFFERED       |                         |



## P R O C E E D I N G S

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PANEL MEMBER:

It is now 3:00 p.m. This public hearing will resume. As a reminder, this hearing is being recorded and transcribed by a court reporter. So if you do not want to be recorded, please exit the hearing room now.

Each speaker has up to three minutes to provide public comment and should come up to the speaker's table when called upon, state their name clearly and spell it for the court reporter before beginning to provide your public comment.

Additionally, the purpose of this public hearing is for PRT to receive public comments. So no Board members or staff will be --- listening to your comments, but will not be answering questions or actively responding to your comments. Questions can be directed to PRT staff members

1       stationed at information tables outside  
2       of the hearing room.

3                       - - -

4       (WHEREUPON, A BREAK WAS HELD.)

5                       - - -

6               V:

7               So as a reminder, this  
8       hearing is being recorded and  
9       transcribed by a court reporter. So if  
10      you do not want to be recorded - - -  
11      we're not recording in this room.

12               PANEL MEMBER:

13               Just the court reporter.

14               PANEL MEMBER:

15               Oh, okay.

16               PANEL MEMBER:

17               Just audio.

18               PANEL MEMBER:

19               All right, okay. Audio  
20      recording. Please exit the hearing  
21      room if you do not wish to be recorded.  
22      Each speaker has up to three minutes to  
23      provide public comment and should come  
24      up to the speaker's table when called  
25      upon and state their name clearly and

1 spell it for the court reporter before  
2 beginning to provide your public  
3 comment.

4 Additionally, the purpose  
5 of the public hearing is for PRT to  
6 receive public comments, so our Board  
7 members and staff will be listening to  
8 your comments, but we will not be  
9 answering questions or actively  
10 responding to your comments.

11 Questions can be directed  
12 to PRT staff members stationed at  
13 information tables outside of the  
14 hearing room.

15 James Craven.

16 MR. CRAVEN:

17 My name's James Craven,  
18 C-R-A-V as in Victor, E-N.. 15214.

19 I'm here today to express  
20 my concern about the elimination of the  
21 01, the 05 and the 012 bus routes to  
22 the North Hills. Those are three main  
23 routes for people who live in the North  
24 Hills. I understand that the 01 will  
25 be taken over by the Route 8

1       Perrysville bus, which is a long  
2       commute from the Park & Ride area into  
3       Downtown. And if it is to take over  
4       the 01, my hope is that it does circle  
5       into the Park & Ride and not force  
6       those riders to go to the road into the  
7       the small bus shelter. Since that Park  
8       & Ride has been recently renovated, it  
9       is a very nice place to park and to  
10      gather for the bus.

11                   The 012, I understand, is  
12      being taken over by the regular 12,  
13      which again, is a meandering, winding,  
14      crowded bus that takes quite a long  
15      time to get there. And in my  
16      experience since post pandemic, that  
17      even though the ridership seems to be  
18      lower than it had been pre pandemic,  
19      buses are still crowded, they're still  
20      full. Maybe not as much, but there's  
21      still ample enough people to ride those  
22      routes. And it would be a shame to  
23      eliminate them because of the  
24      inconvenience of the people living in  
25      the North Hills. That's my piece.

1 PANEL MEMBER:

2 Thank you very much.

3 MR. CRAVEN:

4 Thank you.

5 PANEL MEMBER:

6 Thanks for being here.

7 MR. CRAVEN:

8 Good luck to you all.

9 PANEL MEMBER:

10 Thank you.

11 - - -

12 (WHEREUPON, A BREAK WAS HELD.)

13 - - -

14 PANEL MEMBER:

15 Is it Jerry?

16 MS. WILBON:

17 Charnedda.

18 PANEL MEMBER:

19 I don't think we added

20 her to the overflow.

21 PANEL MEMBER:

22 Okay.

23 PANEL MEMBER:

24 I just caught her before

25 she was leaving.

1 PANEL MEMBER:

2 That's okay. We'll do it  
3 now, so yeah.

4 MS. WILBON:

5 Okay.

6 PANEL MEMBER:

7 Yeah.

8 MS. WILBON:

9 My name is Charnedda M.  
10 Wilbon.

11 PANEL MEMBER:

12 Can you spell it for us?

13 MS. WILBON:

14 C-H-A-R-N-E-D-D-A,  
15 last name W-I-L-B-O-N. And my zip code  
16 now is 15203.

17 I grew up in the ---.

18 V:

19 Give me one second.

20 MS. WILBON:

21 Okay.

22 PANEL MEMBER:

23 Do you want to sit down  
24 or you want to stand?

25 MS. WILBON:

1 I can sit.

2 PANEL MEMBER:

3 Completely up to you. So  
4 you'll have three minutes.

5 MS. WILBON:

6 Okay. I'm sorry.

7 PANEL MEMBER:

8 No, you take your time.

9 MS. WILBON:

10 Okay.

11 PANEL MEMBER:

12 We're here. It doesn't  
13 --- we're here till 7:00. It doesn't  
14 matter. Whenever you're ready.

15 MS. WILBON:

16 Okay, I'm ready.

17 PANEL MEMBER:

18 Okay.

19 MS. WILBON:

20 So I grew up in the 15206  
21 neighborhood, and now I'm in the 15203  
22 neighborhood now. So I grew up there  
23 all my life, but I wanted to speak out  
24 on some friends of mine that catches  
25 the 14 Ohio Valley and needs that bus

1 to continue to run through into  
2 Ambridge for that person that works.  
3 She lives there and works in the  
4 Waterfront. She works at Waterfront at  
5 the Costco. So I just, you know, she  
6 needs that bus that --- you're cutting  
7 that all together, and I would like for  
8 that to continue to stay on.

9 I'm speaking on behalf of  
10 her. I'm sure she will be here around  
11 6:30 if she can, because she didn't get  
12 her ride. But that's really all I  
13 wanted to say. I want to thank y'all.  
14 I hope you get the funding that you  
15 need. I'm praying that you do so  
16 people can continue to get around and,  
17 you know, do what they need to do in  
18 everyday life. I thank you so much for  
19 your time and I hope this gets resolved  
20 the best way for everyone involved.  
21 Thank you.

22 PANEL MEMBER:

23 Thank you so much. We  
24 appreciate you coming down.

25 MS. WILBON:



1                   Thank you so much. I've  
2                   been chasing you down all day.

3                   - - -

4                   (WHEREUPON, A BREAK WAS HELD.)

5                   - - -

6                   PANEL MEMBER:

7                   It is now 7:00. PRT's  
8                   records indicate that there are no  
9                   remaining speakers registered to  
10                  provide public comment at this public  
11                  hearing who have not already provided  
12                  their comments or were given the  
13                  opportunity to provide their comments.  
14                  And we are now at the publicly  
15                  advertised 7:00 p.m. end time for this  
16                  hearing. So we will now continue - - -  
17                  excuse me. We will now conclude this  
18                  public hearing and on behalf of PRT's  
19                  Board and staff, I want to thank  
20                  everyone who took the time to  
21                  participate today and provide PRT with  
22                  your comments regarding the proposed  
23                  funding crisis related FY2026 fare  
24                  increases and service reductions.  
25                  Thank you.

\* \* \* \* \*

MEETING CONCLUDED AT 7:01 P.M.

\* \* \* \* \*

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## CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.  
Dated the 25th day of June, 2025

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Benjamin Morrow", is written over a horizontal line.

Benjamin Morrow,  
Court Reporter



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Pittsburgh Regional Transit  
345 Sixth Ave, 3rd Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
412-566-5500

Updated July 2025