

United States Senate

August 6, 2018

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HOMELAND SECURITY AND
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INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mark Bathrick, Program Manager
Federal Transit Administration
Office of Program Management
1200 New Jersey Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Bathrick:

I am writing to you in support of the City of Billings MET Transit's application for a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Bus and Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program 5339 (b) competitive program grant.

The Billings MET Transit provides approximately 500,000 passenger rides using 25 buses each year. By the end of January 2019, it is anticipated that 16 of their buses will have reached the end of their service life. Many of these buses are currently operating beyond the FTA parameters of 14 years and are all approaching 400,000 miles of use. As the Billings population continues to grow, the demand for reliable public transportation will grow with it. Many residents, including the elderly, those with disabilities, and individuals who cannot afford to buy a car, rely solely on public transportation to get to their jobs, school, doctors' appointments, and the grocery store.

If successful, funding will be used to purchase at least five fully refurbished 35 foot, low floor buses, replacing five aged buses. By purchasing five refurbished buses instead of three new buses, the MET Transit will be able to increase the number of units, in turn increasing effectiveness of grant funding and providing a more reliable system for riders. Refurbished buses are also expected to help the MET Transit start expanding into under-served areas.

I trust you will give this application fair and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines
United States Senator