



— WISCONSIN —
**VETERANS CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

17 October 2016

Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
901 N. 9th Street, Room 306
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Dear Milwaukee County Supervisors,

I am writing in support of the SAVE Transit plan to ensure the future sustainability of Milwaukee County's transportation system.

A robust transportation system that includes high-quality transit service and well-maintained roads and parkways is a major driver of economic development, connecting people with jobs and opportunities all over the County. For many people in our community, transit is also quite simply their lifeline to get to work, school, medical appointments and our region's vibrant cultural assets. This is especially true of Milwaukee's veterans and their families. Protecting this critical system from deterioration is of utmost importance.

There are nearly 50,000 veterans and 5,300 veteran owned businesses that call Milwaukee home. A strong, robust, sustainable public transportation system is vital to the success of Milwaukee's veteran's community. Those who have served their country deserve every opportunity to succeed in their post-military life. Many of these veterans depend on public transportation to get to their job. For those veterans who own a business in Milwaukee, transit plays an even more critical role in providing transportation to their employees as well as their customers. The success of Milwaukee's veterans is tied to the strength of our transit system.

Now is the time to come together to build a stronger transportation system by modernizing our transit service with Bus Rapid Transit, stabilizing the operations of the transit system while protecting the most vulnerable members of our community by reshaping the GO Pass, and creating dedicated funding for transit and infrastructure maintenance with a vehicle registration fee. This three-pronged plan is the best way to address the looming and ever-growing needs of Milwaukee County's transportation system. Supporting the plan ensures our transit lines don't have to be reduced, but can instead be built upon; will allow the County to buy new buses to replace the large number of old ones at the end of their useful lives; and will allow the County to catch up on deferred maintenance on roads, highways, parkways, bridges and bike paths – the critical infrastructure that our County needs to keep people and the economy moving.

Milwaukee's community can't rely on, nor has time to wait for, the state or federal government to fully fund transit. The County needs real local leadership to ensure the



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sustainability of our system for the future. Please support the proposed SAVE Transit plan and help keep Milwaukee County traveling forward.

Sincerely,

Saul J. Newton
Executive Director, Wisconsin Veterans Chamber of Commerce