

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 230561)

RESOLUTION

Calling upon the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to pass legislation to enable new county level investments that can help to advance transit and transportation projects that drive local priorities.

WHEREAS, The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) is the largest and busiest public transportation provider in the Commonwealth providing over 600,000 daily trips in 2023, providing access to destinations across the region and directly relieving traffic congestion from roadways; and

WHEREAS, SEPTA is a crucial mobility lifeline and economic driver for 4.2 million residents in southeastern Pennsylvania, including nearly 200,000 Philadelphia residents who do not have access to a vehicle; and

WHEREAS, Greater Philadelphia is the Commonwealth's most economically productive region, generating 41% of the state's economic activity with 32% of its population on just 5% of its land – a degree of economic productivity and density that is not possible without transit to efficiently move people throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, SEPTA is among the 50 largest employers in the Commonwealth and generates \$4 billion in annual statewide economic activity, supporting 26,600 jobs statewide, including 14,500 jobs in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, over the past five years (2018-2022) SEPTA has procured goods and services totaling over \$1.15 billion from Pennsylvania companies, including over \$350 million from Philadelphia employers; and

WHEREAS, investment in SEPTA trails other competitor regions, while capital needs continue to grow amid COVID-related costs, inflation and the age of SEPTA vehicles and infrastructure; and

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WHEREAS, over the last decade, peer regions have invested an average of 75% more in transit than southeastern Pennsylvania and are investing nearly \$70 per capita every year in local funding compared to southeastern Pennsylvania's \$17; and

WHEREAS, the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law / Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (BIL/IIJA) of 2021, which increased funding for competitive transit and transportation project grants, requires substantial state or local matching funds for most grant awards; and

WHEREAS, the mechanisms currently available to invest in transit and transportation infrastructure have not kept pace with needs and new opportunities, especially the new funds available through BIL/IIJA; and

WHEREAS, the costs of continued underfunding of transit and transportation are formidable. SEPTA's \$5.1 billion repair backlog will continue to grow, and projects of significance will stall; and

WHEREAS, to address this situation, legislation to enable local transportation funding options was introduced in the PA House of Representatives through the leadership of House Transportation Committee Chairman Ed Neilson, Representative Joe Hohenstein and Representative Ben Waxman; and

WHEREAS, under the measure, certain counties in Pennsylvania, including the five counties covered by SEPTA, would be able to generate new local funding through modest fees or surcharges to help advance transportation and transit projects that drive local priorities; and

WHEREAS, passage of the measure would create a valuable tool in leveraging state and federal resources to accelerate transportation and transit projects that promote inclusive economic growth in Philadelphia and the region including SEPTA Trolley Modernization, Reimagining Regional Rail, and vehicle replacements; and

WHEREAS, passage of the measure would provide options for new funding sources and investment so that SEPTA can continue working to provide necessary mobility options, improve equity and environmental sustainability, and drive economic growth in Philadelphia and the region; and

WHEREAS, Local Funding Options legislation has the support of SEPTA leadership; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, does hereby call upon the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to pass Local Transportation Funding Options legislation to enable new county level investments that can help to advance transit and transportation projects that drive local priorities.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twenty second day of June, 2023

Darrell L. Clarke
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Squilla
Sponsored by: Councilmember Squilla