

March 5, 2012

Members of the Ann Arbor City Council,

I write to you today to urge your support for the four-party Public Transportation Agreement between Washtenaw County, the city of Ypsilanti and the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority. This agreement is the culmination of nearly two years of public discussion and planning for how to meet our region's long term transportation needs and it is time for the city council to allow that discussion to continue.

As President of the Brain Injury Association of Michigan, I can attest to the need persons suffering from brain injuries have for improved transportation connections throughout our region. There are thousands of people living in Washtenaw County who rely on public transit as their only option to get to the grocery store, doctors' offices, and other vital locations. Too often that service is not frequent enough, or does not extent far enough beyond the urban core, to meet the needs of our most vulnerable citizens.

As a resident of Ann Arbor, I also understand the role public transit plays in the economic vitality of our city. Ann Arbor businesses rely on employees and customers who live beyond our city's limits. Likewise, our residents sometimes need to access services beyond our borders. As fuel prices approach \$4 per gallon, improved transportation connections will help residents save money and allow those savings to then flow through our local economy. Improved public transit will also decrease congestion on our roads and help improve our air quality, thus further enhancing the desirability of our region as a place to live and work.

None of these needs I've identified can be met if the Ann Arbor city council closes the door on the four-party agreement. While I can appreciate the due diligence the council has taken before entering into this agreement, there remain several more opportunities for council members to review plans and ensure proposed service improvements are right for our city before anything is finalized. Let's keep the discussion of how to meet our transit needs moving forward. Please sign the four-party Public Transportation Agreement on March 5.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Dabbs
President