Mass Transit Neg

Mass Transit Neg 1

Link – States CP 2

Agenda Politics Links 3

Election Politics Links 4

Gentrification Turn 5

Ext. Gentrification 6

Cap Link 7

Inherency 8

Racism/Solvency 9

Link – States CP

States solve – more efficient

Michael **Gordon 2011** [Economic Analyst at Charles River Associates, “Funding Urban Mass Transit in the United States”, Boston College Economics Honor’s Thesis, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\_id=2007981]

Urban mass transit systems also rely on other government sources of funding beyond federal contributions. For example, in 2008 Boston’s MBTA derived about 15% of its funding from each the federal and local government, while almost 40% of its total funding came from the state, and the remaining 30% from other sources, such as fare revenues and private contributions.20 In fact, federal funding sometimes conditions on the state or local governments matching its funding.21 Federal funds also often require agencies to spend on specific items. For example, ARRA funds capital improvements, even though many systems cannot cover their operating costs. This is especially true during the recent recession – many agencies have cut service, laid off employees, and raised fares in an attempt to cover operating costs. It may make more sense in these cases for government subsidization to target operating losses instead of capital improvements.22 However, funding does not appear to be increasing in the wake of the recession. Only 10% of public transportation agencies expected an increase in local/regional funding in 2010, while 66% expected a decrease. Meanwhile, only 11% expected an increase in state funding while 56% expected a decrease.23 As a result, 69% of urban transit agencies expected budget shortfalls in 2011, indicating that these systems do not expect the current combinations of funding to adequately cover their costs.24 **State and local funding may be more effective than federal funding because the dollars are more centralized**. A system applying for federal funding does so at the expense of general taxpayers; however, a system applying for state and/or local funding does so at the expense of taxpayers closer to the system. As such, the requested funds may need to have more of an effect to satisfy the taxpayers because they can more easily see the results. If a system must raise funds to avoid a deficit, for example, local and state sources may be more willing to help on this account in order to keep the system running and equitable. This follows the idea of fiscal federalism, which states that providing services at more local levels “in turn improves the efficiency of the public sector by providing a better match between the public services people desire and the public services provided to them.”25 However, the federal government still gives larger funds that the state and local governments cannot afford to replace.

Agenda Politics Links

Republicans hate the plan

Robert **Cruickshank 2/6**/12 [writer for California HSR, “House Republicans Vote to Defund Mass Transit in America”, http://www.cahsrblog.com/2012/02/house-republicans-vote-to-defund-mass-transit-in-america/, RH]

But will these government agencies and legislators apply the same logic to virtually every other mass transit project in California now that the House Republicans have voted for massive cuts in transit spending? Yonah Freemark at The Transport Politic explains: The Ways and Means Committee acted to eliminate the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund, destroying public transportation’s source of steady federal financing for capital projects, first established in the 1980s. The members of the committee determined that to remedy the fact that gas taxes have not been increased since 1993,\* the most appropriate course was not to raise the tax (as would make sense considering inflation, more efficient vehicles, and the negative environmental and congestion-related effects of gas consumption) but rather to transfer all of its revenues to the construction of highways. Public transit, on the other hand, would have to fight for an appropriation from the general fund, losing its traditional guarantee of funding and forcing any spending on it to be offset by reductions in other government programs.\*\* This as the GOP has made evident its intention to reduce funding for that same general fund through a continued push for income tax reductions, even for the highest earners.

Republicans want to squash the plan

WILL **DOIG 2/13**/12 [writer for Salon, Salon is the leading progressive news site, combining award-winning commentary and reporting on the most important issues of the day. Our core mission: uncover what truly matters in the world of news and culture, “The Tea Party’s war on mass transit”, http://www.salon.com/2012/02/13/the\_tea\_partys\_war\_on\_mass\_transit/, RH]

The Tea Party soared to power on the notion that it was the antidote to wasteful government spending. It’s now clear that reigniting the culture wars was a top priority, too. From guns to abortion, the extremist wing of the Republican Party has fought to turn back the clock on many socially progressive ideals. Mass transit is its newest target. “Federal transportation and infrastructure policy has traditionally been an area of strong bipartisan agreement,” says Aaron Naparstek, a Loeb Fellow at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design and founder of Streetsblog.org. “Now, it seems, Republicans want to turn cities into a part of the culture wars. Now it’s abortion, gay marriage and subways.” House Republicans seek to eliminate the Mass Transit Account from the federal Highway Trust Fund. The Mass Transit Account is where public transportation programs get their steady source of funding. Without it, transit would be devastated, and urban life as we know it could become untenable. And there’s the rub. “The Tea Party leaders and the Republicans who pander to them do not care about cost-effectiveness in the slightest,” wrote blogger Alon Levy in a comment about the bill on the Transport Politic. “They dislike transit for purely cultural and ideological reasons.” To the Tea Party, transit smacks of the public sector, social engineering and alternative lifestyles. How do we know this is a cultural battle and not an economic one? Because transit spending is far more fiscally fair than spending on roads and highways. Transit riders subsidize roads to a greater degree than drivers subsidize transit. And cities, which are the chief engines behind the American economy, rely on buses and trains to function. “The economic future for states hinges largely on the performance of their metropolitan economies,” determined a recent Brookings Institution study.

Election Politics Links

Public opposes the plan

Robert **Poole 2011** [“How People Think We Should Pay for Roads, Transit, High-Speed Rail and Other Infrastructure”, http://reason.com/blog/2011/12/20/how-people-think-we-should-pay-for-roads, RH]

Public disaffection with federal transportation efforts goes beyond opposition to gas tax increases. Although the federal government has thus far spent $8 billion to fund high-speed rail, only 34% think government should do this, while 55% think high-speed rail should be limited to routes where passengers would pay fares large enough to pay for the service. In addition, while Congress devotes 20% of Highway Trust Fund spending to mass transit, 48% of Americans think that transit should receive no more of transportation funding than its share in travel (which in most places would be less than 5%). And by a margin of 62% to 30% Americans favor robust highway funding, that most people travel mostly by car, as opposed to the idea that transportation funding should focus on getting people out of their cars by disproportionately funding transit and other non-driving alternatives.

Gentrification Turn

Expanding transit systems lowers ridership – this perpetuates racism

**Northeastern 2010** [“Public transit policies may lower ridership”, news@Northeastern, http://www.northeastern.edu/news/stories/2010/10/transitreport.html, Northeastern University, Oct 19, RH]

Extending public transportation to a metropolitan neighborhood for the first time can, in some cases, raise rents, bringing in a population of wealthier residents who would rather drive than take public transportation. That’s the conclusion of a report by the Kitty and Michael Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy, which found that new public transit investments can sometimes lead to gentrification that prices out renters and low-income households—people considered core public-transportation users—working against the public goal of boosting transit ridership. The study, released today, urged planners and policymakers to consider the unintended consequences of neighborhood gentrification when expanding or improving public transit, given the risk that transit investment can cause undesirable neighborhood change. “Transit planners frequently speak of the need for transit-oriented development to support ridership, but what transit stations need is transit-oriented neighbors who will regularly use the system,” said Stephanie Pollack, the report’s lead author and associate director of the Dukakis Center. “In the neighborhoods (around the country) where new light rail stations were built, almost every aspect of neighborhood change was magnified,” added Barry Bluestone, director of the Dukakis Center and the report’s coauthor. “Rents rose faster; owner-occupied units became more prevalent. Before transit was built, these neighborhoods had been dominated by low-income, renter households.” The report, “Maintaining Diversity In America’s Transit-Rich Neighborhoods: Tools for Equitable Neighborhood Change,” was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. It includes new research analyzing socioeconomic changes in 42 neighborhoods in 12 metropolitan areas across the United States first served by rail transit between 1990 and 2000. The report’s findings, researchers said, also raise concerns about equity. Core transit riders are predominantly people of color and/or low-income who disproportionately live in transit-rich neighborhoods. Researchers calculated that transit-served metropolitan regions are currently home to over half of all African Americans, 60 percent of all Hispanics and 70 percent of all immigrants in the United States.

Ext. Gentrification

Expanding mass transit increases property value – this hurts colored people

Thomas W. **Sanchez et al 2003** [Thomas W. Sanchez, associate professor of Urban Affairs and Planning and research fellow in the Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech in Alexandria, Virginia, Rich Stolz, Senior Policy Analyst at Center for Community Change, Jacinta S. Ma, Legal and Policy Advocacy Associate at The Civil Rights Project at Harvard, “Moving to Equity: Addressing Inequitable Effects of Transportation Policies on Minorities”, The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University and the Center for Community Change, http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/metro-and-regional-inequalities/transportation/moving-to-equity-addressing-inequitable-effects-of-transportation-policies-on-minorities/sanchez-moving-to-equity-transportation-policies.pdf]

While some consider property value increases resulting from gentrification to be positive, such changes have also been criticized for worsening the well-being of low-income persons, especially in neighborhoods of color. Some have argued that increases in property values are capitalized in rent increases, which then push households that are less able to pay to other neighborhoods or to undesirable housing arrangements. 123 In particular, some argue that certain antisprawl land use policies that direct housing development away from the urban fringe reduce housing affordability and limit housing choice, especially for low-income households. Others have argued, in addition to causing displacement, that gentrification is undesirable because it leads to homogenous neighborhoods that are not socioeconomically or culturally diverse. 124 However, there is insufficient data to draw specific conclusions about the net social and economic impacts of transportation investments on gentrification and displacement.

Cap Link

Policies designed to reduce inequality by fostering employment conceal and legitimize structure inequalities rendered necessary and inevitable by the structural characteristics of market capitalism.

Ruth **Levitas 2003** [University of Bristol, “The Idea of Social Inclusion”, http://socialpolicy.alberta.ca/files/documents/2003\_social\_inclusion\_research\_conference.pdf, RH]

Using utopia in the first, analytic, sense, the underpinning model of a good society is a meritocracy in which, as the British Prime Minister Tony Blair says, 'people rise to the highest level their talents take them' (Blair 2001b). Blair's model of a good society is one with a high social floor in the form of a means-tested safety net as high as possible consistent with current levels of taxation, and meritocratic social mobility. Market capitalism can then be allowed to run its course, and there is no need to worry about high incomes at the top (Hutton 2001). Thus during the 2001 election campaign, Blair called for 'a genuine enterprise and entrepreneurial culture, vital and vibrant as that of the USA, and open to as many' (Blair 2001a). The presumption is that even extreme inequality does not result in better educational chances for the children of the rich, nor in inequalities of health or access to healthcare. Although society may be unequal, equality of opportunity and high social mobility, mean that the unequal rewards are 'fair'. The problems and absurdities of this kind of meritocracy have been amply demonstrated in the dystopian mode by Michael Young in The Rise of the Meritocracy (Young 1958), and more recently by the children's writer William Nicholson in The Wind Singer (Nicholson 2000). The nature of this implied good society is usually concealed, partly as a consequence of the metaphor of exclusion itself. The danger of the inclusion/exclusion metaphor is that it evokes a dichotomous image of society, in which there are insiders and outsiders, and only the very marginal are a problem. If the idea of social inclusion is understood simply as the opposite of exclusion, and exclusion is understood in terms of a mixture of SID and MUD, it is in Mannheim's terms ideological. It is part of a discursive legitimation of the status quo. It implies lifting or coercing some marginal groups over a threshold above which inequalities are deemed to be the outcome of individual attributes, whether innate or acquired. The primary division in society is seen as between small groups of marginalised outsiders, and the included majority. Other inequalities, notably that between the super-rich and others, are **regarded as irrelevant, and** thereby **legitimised**. Of course, the UK is one of the most unequal societies in the EU, so its adherence to the meritocratic model is extreme. But the general emphasis in the EU remains on the role of paid work both as a vehicle of social integration and as the primary means of distributing the social product. Policies for poverty reduction are essentially policies to promote employability and employment. The question is, however, whether the idea of inclusion has the potential to be a transformative idea.

Race oppression is used by capital to ideologically justify economic exploitation— to break down racism we must first break down capitalism

Young 06 (Robert Young, Post colonial Theorist, Putting Materialism back into Race Theory, Winter/Spring, Red Critique)

This essay advances a materialist theory of race. In my view, race oppression dialectically intersects with the exploitative logic of advanced capitalism, a regime which deploys race in the interest of surplus accumulation**.** Thus, race operates at the (economic) base and therefore produces cultural and ideological effects at the superstructure; in turn, these effects—in very historically specific way—interact with and ideologically justify the operations at the economic base**.** In a sense then, race encodes the totality of contemporary capitalist social relations, which is why race cuts across a range of seemingly disparate social sites in contemporary US society. For instance, one can mark race difference and its discriminatory effects in such diverse sites as health care, housing/real estate, education, law, job market, and many other social sites. However, unlike many commentators who engage race matters, I do not isolate these social sites and view race as a local problem, which would lead to reformist measures along the lines of either legal reform or a cultural-ideological battle to win the hearts and minds of people and thus keep the existing socio-economic arrangements intact; instead, I foreground the relationality of these sites within the exchange mechanism of multinational capitalism. Consequently, I believe, the eradication of race oppression also requires a totalizing political project: the transformation of existing capitalism—a system which produces difference (the racial/gender division of labor) and accompanying ideological narratives that justify the resulting social inequality. Hence, my project articulates a transformative theory of race—a theory that reclaims revolutionary class politics in the interests of contributing toward a post-racist society. In other words**,** the transformation from actually existing capitalism into socialism constitutes the condition of possibility for a post-racist society—a society free from racial and all other forms of oppression. By freedom, I do not simply mean a legal or cultural articulation of individual rights as proposed by bourgeois race theorists. Instead, I theorize freedom as a material effect of emancipated economic forms.  I foreground my (materialist) understanding of race as a way to contest contemporary accounts of race, which erase any determinate connection to economics. For instance, humanism and poststructuralism represent two dominant views on race in the contemporary academy. Even though they articulate very different theoretical positions, they produce similar ideological effects: the suppression of economics. They collude in redirecting attention away from the logic of capitalist exploitation and point us to the cultural questions of sameness (humanism) or difference (poststructuralism). In developing my project, I critique the ideological assumptions of some exemplary instances of humanist and poststructuralist accounts of race, especially those accounts that also attempt to displace Marxism, and, in doing so, I foreground the historically determinate link between race and exploitation. It is this link that forms the core of what I am calling a transformative theory of race. The transformation of race from a sign of exploitation to one of democratic multiculturalism, ultimately, requires the transformation of capitalism.

**Memmi is talking about racism as a means to justify class privilege**

San Juan Jr. 3 (E. San Juan Junior, Cultural Logic, Marxism and the Race/Class Problematic: A Re-Articulation, 2003, Cultural logic)

A recent translationof AlbertMemmi'smagisterial bookentitledRacism reminds us that any understanding of the complex network of ideas and practices classified by that term will always lead us to the foundational bedrock of class relations. Memmi defines racism as "the generalized and final assigning of values to real or imaginary differences, to the accuser's benefit and at his victim's expense, in order to justify the former's own privileges or aggression" (2000, 169).The underlying frame of intelligibility for this process of assigning values cannot be anything else but the existence of class-divided societies and nation-states with unequal allocations of power and resources.Both motivation and consequences can be adequately explained by the logic of class oppression and its entailments.In our epoch of globalization, inequality between propertied nation-states(where transnational corporate powers are based)and the rest of the world has become universalized and threatens the welfare of humanity and the planet.

Inherency

Status quo solves – budget allocation now

**Department of Transportation 7/23**/12 [“U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood Announces $787 Million to Repair, Modernize Nation’s Aging Transit Infrastructure”, http://www.dot.gov/affairs/2012/fta4312.html, RH]

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today announced $787 million that will put Americans to work modernizing and replacing aging transit facilities and vehicles to meet the growing demand from millions of riders across the country. This third round of federal funding will support 255 projects in 48 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. “President Obama’s support for an America built to last is putting people back to work across the country repairing and upgrading our nation’s public transit systems,” said Secretary LaHood. “By investing in the transit infrastructure people depend on to get where we need to go each day, we will keep our economy moving forward well into the future.” Reflecting the need for infrastructure investment nationwide, demand for the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) FY2012 State of Good Repair and Bus Livability funds was overwhelming. FTA received 836 project applications totaling $4 billion in requests. In FY2010 and FY2011, FTA awarded a total of more than $1.8 billion in grants for hundreds of state of good repair projects, primarily involving buses and bus facilities.

Racism/Solvency

1- Can’t solve transportation racism; their author concedes alternate causality which means expanding mass transit can’t solve

a- disaster response

Robert **Bullard 2006** [1AC Author, “Deadly Waiting Game: Environmental Justice in Post-Katrina New Orleans, http://www.prrac.org/pdf/rebuild\_healthy\_nola.pdf, RH]

Government has a long history of discriminating against black victims of hurricanes, floods, and droughts. Clearly, race matters in terms of swiftness of response, allocation of post-disaster assistance, and reconstruction assistance. Emergency response often reflects the pre-existing social and political stratification structure with black communities receiving less priority than white communities. Race and class dynamics play out in disaster survivors’ ability to rebuild, replace infrastructure, obtain loans, and locate temporary and permanent housing (Bolin and Bolton 1986; Dyson, 2006; Pastor et al. 2006).

b- poor evacuation

Robert **Bullard 2006** [1AC Author, “Deadly Waiting Game: Environmental Justice in Post-Katrina New Orleans, http://www.prrac.org/pdf/rebuild\_healthy\_nola.pdf, RH]

The Katrina disaster also exposed a weakness in urban mass evacuation plans (Litman 2005). New Orleans’s emergency plan called for thousands of the city’s most vulnerable population to be left behind in their homes, shelters, and hospitals (Schleifstein 2005). Times-Picayune reporter, Bruce Nolan, summed up the emergency transportation plan: “**City, state and federal emergency officials are preparing to give the poorest of New Orleans’ poor a historically blunt message: In the event of a major hurricane, you‘re on your own**” (Nolan 2005). Clearly, emergency transportation planners failed the “most vulnerable” of society—individuals without cars, non-drivers, disabled, homeless, sick persons, elderly, and children. Nearly two-thirds of the Katrina victims in Louisiana were older than age 60. This data confirms what many believe— that Katrina killed the weakest residents (Riccardi 2005, A6). Car ownership is almost universal in the United States with 91.7 percent of American households owning at least one motor vehicle. However, two in ten households in the Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama disaster area had no car (Associated Press 2005). People in the hardest hit areas were twice as likely as most Americans to be poor and without a car. Over one-third of New Orleans’ African Americans do not own a car. Before Katrina, nearly one quarter of New Orleans residents relied on public transportation (Katz, Fellows, and Holmes 2005). And 102,122 disabled persons lived in New Orleans at the time of the hurricane (Russell 2005). Local, state, and federal emergency planners have known for years the risks facing New Orleans’ transit-dependent residents (State of Louisiana 2000; Fischett 2001; Bourne 2004; City of New Orleans 2005). At least 100,000 New Orleans citizens do not have means of personal transportation to evacuate in case of a major storm (City of New Orleans 2005). A 2002 article entitled “Planning for the Evacuation of New Orleans” details the risks faced by hundreds of thousands of car-less and non-drivers in the New Orleans area (Wolshon 2002). Although the various agencies had this knowledge of a large vulnerable population, there simply was no effective plan to evacuate these New Orleanians away from rising water. This problem received national attention in 1998 during Hurricane Georges when emergency evacuation plans left behind mostly residents who did not own cars (Perlstein and Thevenot 2004, AI). The city’s emergency plan was modified to include the use of public buses to evacuate those without transportation. When Hurricane Ivan struck New Orleans in 2004 however, many car-less New Orleanians were left to fend for themselves, while others were evacuated to the Superdome and other “shelters of last resort” (Laska 2004). The New Orleans Rapid Transit Authority (RTA) emergency plan designated 64 buses and 10 lift vans to transport residents to shelters. This plan proved woefully inadequate. About 190 RTA buses were lost to flooding. The 1,300 RTA employees are dispersed across the country and many are homeless (Eggler 2005, B1).

2- No spillover- 1AC Schafft evidence indicates that this oppression has been going on for centuries, means this instance is not enough to solve for alternate causalities.

3- Can’t solve jobs- plan only mandates increasing infrastructure investment, they don’t mandate where and how the systems will be placed. White people live also live in urban areas, which means that job disparity remains inevitable.

4- Improved access to mass transit does not correlate to employment opportunities

Thomas W. **Sanchez et al 2003** [Thomas W. Sanchez, associate professor of Urban Affairs and Planning and research fellow in the Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech in Alexandria, Virginia, Rich Stolz, Senior Policy Analyst at Center for Community Change, Jacinta S. Ma, Legal and Policy Advocacy Associate at The Civil Rights Project at Harvard, “Moving to Equity: Addressing Inequitable Effects of Transportation Policies on Minorities”, The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University and the Center for Community Change, http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/metro-and-regional-inequalities/transportation/moving-to-equity-addressing-inequitable-effects-of-transportation-policies-on-minorities/sanchez-moving-to-equity-transportation-policies.pdf]

Urban public transportation systems operate most efficiently in concentrated, densely developed urban areas. These systems, which also tend to be oriented toward downtowns, do a poor job of serving dispersed trip origins and destinations. Often transit systems do not adequately serve the needs of minorities and low-income individuals with nontraditional work hours. There are several important analytical issues to consider when examining the relationship between residential and employment locations. The simple ratio of total jobs to total working-age persons in a specific geographic area is an inadequate indicator of mismatch. Workers’ job skills, educational background, gender, race, and mobility are significant factors in determining the numbers and types of jobs that a worker is qualified to hold. Controlling for “skills” and “mobility” matching, the disparity in employment levels by race and gender is generally attributed to historic or contemporary discrimination. 104 Recent research suggests that higher levels of access to public transit service is associated with lower levels of metropolitan wage inequality. 105 However, further research is needed that focuses on the relationships among residential location, transportation mobility, and employment outcomes to inform appropriate public policy decisions. There are mixed findings on whether improved access to public transportation results in higher levels of employment. A 1997 study in Dade County, Florida did not find a strong relationship between public transportation access to employment locations and rates of employment of minorities.

5- Increased automobility ownership solves

Thomas W. **Sanchez et al 2003** [Thomas W. Sanchez, associate professor of Urban Affairs and Planning and research fellow in the Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech in Alexandria, Virginia, Rich Stolz, Senior Policy Analyst at Center for Community Change, Jacinta S. Ma, Legal and Policy Advocacy Associate at The Civil Rights Project at Harvard, “Moving to Equity: Addressing Inequitable Effects of Transportation Policies on Minorities”, The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University and the Center for Community Change, http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/metro-and-regional-inequalities/transportation/moving-to-equity-addressing-inequitable-effects-of-transportation-policies-on-minorities/sanchez-moving-to-equity-transportation-policies.pdf]

Some argue that transportation policies and people’s preferences are so strongly in favor of traveling by automobiles that mobility benefits from public transportation are considered negligible. 109 Some also argue that public transit is not a viable alternative to the personal automobile due to the geographic imbalance between housing and job locations. 110 The fact that small investments are made in transit (relative to roads and highways) while metropolitan areas continue to sprawl leads to further auto-dependency that imposes a disproportionate burden on low-income persons. 111 Many low-income and minority households lack access to an automobile and thus depend on public transit, which limits the location and types of employment that are available to them. 112 Recent research suggests that increased automobile ownership rates may have beneficial impacts on low-income workers and their families. 113 Autos not only improve job search activities, but also job retention, especially in cases where (or when) public transit service is unavailable. 114 In addition, autos provide flexibility beyond work-related trips, so that individuals can meet other daily needs related to child care, education, shopping, health care, etc. The role of cars should be a consideration in transportation mobility strategies for low-income and minority people. The challenge, however, is to devise public policy that effectively increases auto access in cases in which other modes are infeasible.

6- Even if they have public transit, access to it by minorities is hindered by poverty – merely expanding can’t solve,

Thomas W. **Sanchez et al 2003** [Thomas W. Sanchez, associate professor of Urban Affairs and Planning and research fellow in the Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech in Alexandria, Virginia, Rich Stolz, Senior Policy Analyst at Center for Community Change, Jacinta S. Ma, Legal and Policy Advocacy Associate at The Civil Rights Project at Harvard, “Moving to Equity: Addressing Inequitable Effects of Transportation Policies on Minorities”, The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University and the Center for Community Change, http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/metro-and-regional-inequalities/transportation/moving-to-equity-addressing-inequitable-effects-of-transportation-policies-on-minorities/sanchez-moving-to-equity-transportation-policies.pdf]

Although the large majority of K–12 students do not need to rely on public transit to get to school, for those who do, access to that transportation may mean the difference between attending and missing school. For instance, during efforts to obtain free student transit passes from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission serving the San Francisco Bay area, evidence was presented that students without access to public transportation would not attend school. A number of high school students in Oakland and El Cerrito, which have significant minority populations, **testified that they needed free transit passes because their families sometimes had to decide between food and bus fare**. 134 In Portland, Oregon, the school district does not provide bus service for students living within 1.5 miles of a school. Sisters in Action for Power, an organization focusing on the interests of low-income girls and girls of color, pressed for free rides to high school on public buses after its survey of more than 2,000 students found that 11 percent reported missing school due to their inability to meet transportation costs. 135 Students in Providence, Rhode Island, in an informal survey of more than 500 high school students, found that a number of students whose families were unable to afford bus passes stayed home and missed school, especially during harsh winter days, and others got detention for being late because of the amount of time it took them to walk to school. 136 Currently, students attending Providence public high schools who live within three miles of their school must walk or provide their own means of transportation.