



## **Legislator-Focused Testimony on Public Transit in Nebraska**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak about the essential role public transit plays across Nebraska, particularly in our rural communities.

Public transportation is not a luxury—it is core infrastructure that ensures Nebraskans can access healthcare, employment, education, and daily necessities. In many rural areas, public transit is not just an option; it is the only transportation lifeline available.

### **Healthcare Access**

Reliable transit is a determining factor in whether many Nebraskans can receive timely medical care. Seniors, individuals with disabilities, and residents managing chronic conditions depend on transit for dialysis, specialist appointments, pharmacy access, and hospital visits. When transportation is unavailable, healthcare outcomes worsen and emergency room utilization increases—costs that ultimately fall on our healthcare systems and the state.

### **Economic Development and Workforce Stability**

Public transit directly supports Nebraska's workforce. It connects employees to job sites, enables consistent attendance, and expands the labor pool for employers across the state. When workers can reliably reach their jobs, businesses thrive, productivity increases, and communities benefit from stronger local economies. Transit also supports commerce by enabling residents to shop locally and participate in community life.

### **Independence, Dignity, and Community Participation**

For older adults who can no longer drive, people with disabilities, and residents without access to a personal vehicle, public transit is the key to maintaining independence. It reduces isolation, supports mental well-being, and allows individuals to remain active contributors to their communities. These are values Nebraskans hold deeply.

### **A High-Value, Cost-Effective Investment**

Investing in public transit is fiscally responsible. Every dollar invested generates returns through:

- Reduced healthcare costs

- Increased workforce participation
- Greater economic activity
- Delayed or avoided long-term care placements

Transit funding is not an expense—it is a strategic investment in Nebraska’s people and economy.

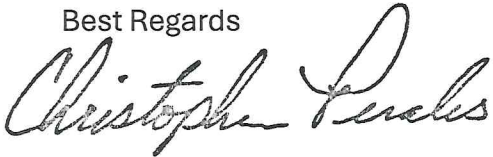
### **A Call for Continued Legislative Support**

Nebraska’s rural transit systems serve some of our most vulnerable residents while strengthening the economic and social fabric of our communities. These services are not simply transportation programs; they are lifelines that allow Nebraskans to live with dignity and access essential services.

We respectfully urge continued legislative support and investment in public transit to ensure that every Nebraskan—regardless of age, ability, or ZIP code—has access to the opportunities and services they need to thrive.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christopher Perales". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the "Best Regards" text.

Mayor, Chris Perales