



## **DRAFT 2026 FEDERAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM**

### **CORE PRINCIPLES**

The District will pursue policies and actions that support its mission “to deliver safe, reliable, sustainable transit service that responds to the needs of our customers and communities.”

~~Our advocacy efforts will be further guided by the core values of Safety, Service, Environmental Sustainability, Equity, Innovation, Integrity, and Trust enshrined in the District's Strategic Plan~~

### **DRAFT 2026 FEDERAL ADVOCACY PRIORITIES**

#### ***Identify and secure long-term funding for...***

1. Our priorities in surface transportation reauthorization legislation. This includes, but is not limited to, **maintaining or increasing** funding levels for transit capital programs, including the **Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program and Urbanized Area Formula Grants**.
2. The delivery of **safe**, reliable, ~~equitable, accessible,~~ and affordable public transportation **that is accessible to all**.
3. Workforce recruitment, training, development, retention, safety, ~~wellness,~~ and well-being.
4. **Transit and maintenance operations, paratransit program needs,** priority capital projects, and ridership ~~recovery~~ **growth**.

#### ~~5. Transit operations~~

6. Addressing the District's projected ~~post-pandemic and inflation-induced~~ operating deficits.
7. Sustaining and growing federal investments in ~~bus and~~ transit infrastructure, **buses, and amenities**.
8. Investments that protect and enhance the resiliency of the District's physical, cybersecurity, operational, and human assets.
9. **Continued investment in the District's clean propulsion technology program.**
- ~~10. Comprehensive sustainability initiatives, including but not limited to zero-emission bus and paratransit program needs~~
- ~~11. Achieving compliance with federally mandated regulations~~

#### ***Advocate for transit-supportive laws, regulations, policies, and actions that...***

1. Provide the means needed to ensure the District's ~~fiscal integrity~~ **financial sustainability**.
2. Support transportation workforce development, training, and safety.
3. Respond to customer needs and ~~result in increased~~ **grow** transit ridership.
4. Support innovative technology initiatives, partnerships, and investments that benefit public transit and **increase grow** ridership.

5. Support efforts to grow and stabilize the Highway Trust Fund and preserve, at a minimum, the 20 percent allocation to the Mass Transit Account.
6. Reduce **or remove** regulatory barriers to efficiently develop and deliver District projects and services.
7. Avoid new, unfunded mandates and regulations.
8. ~~Require direct and equal representation of transit properties on Metropolitan Planning Organizations~~
9. **Ensure public transit agencies with independently elected governing boards have a voting seat(s) on the Board of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).**
10. **Require the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to jointly establish an appeals process for MPO actions that procedurally violate Federal law or regulations.**
11. Support the ~~provision of~~ **District's zero-emission clean propulsion technology** bus and paratransit vehicle service ~~and programming.~~
12. ~~Promote~~ **Make** equitable access to transportation **safe and accessible to all** ~~and prioritize underserved and disadvantaged communities.~~

**DRAFT 2026 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR***All dates approximate pending release of the 2026 legislative calendar*

|                          |                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 01/03/2026               | Congress Reconvenes                                                                                                    |
| 01/19/2026               | MLK Jr. Day                                                                                                            |
| 02/03/2026               | President's FY 2026 budget request sent to Congress                                                                    |
| 02/16/26 – 02/20/2026    | Congressional Recess: President's Day Holiday (House only)                                                             |
| March 2026               | Congress begins FY 2027 Appropriations hearings                                                                        |
| 03/30/2026 – 04/10/2026  | Congressional Recess: Spring Holiday                                                                                   |
| 05/25/2026 – 05/29/2026  | Congressional Recess: Memorial Day Holiday                                                                             |
| 06/29/2026 – 07/03/2026  | Congressional Recess: Fourth of July Holiday                                                                           |
| 08/3/2026 – 09/01/2026   | Congressional Summer Recess                                                                                            |
| September 2026           | Congress finalizes FY 2027 Appropriations or passes a Continuing Resolution to fund the government beyond September 30 |
| 10/26/2026 – 11/04/2026  | Congressional recess for Member campaigning                                                                            |
| 11/3/2026                | Election Day                                                                                                           |
| 11/23/2026 – 11/27/2026  | Congressional Recess: Thanksgiving Holiday                                                                             |
| November – December 2026 | Congress works until FY 2027 Appropriations are complete                                                               |
| December 18, 2026        | Target end date of the 119 <sup>th</sup> Congress                                                                      |