



## Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments

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March 17, 2021

Northwest Ohio Legislative Delegation,

The Transportation Council of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) strongly supports legislative language modifying the requirements for membership into the service area of a public transit agency. TMACOG is the metropolitan planning organization for northwestern Ohio and southeastern Michigan. Our transportation planning region includes Lucas and Wood counties in Ohio and the southern three townships of Monroe County, Michigan. Together, our members work on transportation and environmental issues that affect quality of life for everyone in our region.

Public Transit is an essential service in the Toledo area. Individuals rely on a safe, convenient, and reliable transit system to get them to where they need to be. Studies have shown that a robust transit system provides numerous economic benefits. Expanding transit options to a county-wide service area would better serve the needs of the community.

Currently, a community wishing to become a member of TARTA must approve a resolution seeking membership, but it is a statutory requirement that a unanimous consent of all current member jurisdictions is required before the issue can appear before voters for final approval. The ability to add new members to TARTA is vitally important for the future of transit in the Toledo area.

Legislative language is needed that amends the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) to allow for the majority consent of TARTA members for the issue to appear on the ballot. This would provide an opportunity for voters to weigh in on the service area of the transit agency.

The TMACOG 2045 Transportation Plan – Update 2020 and the 2021-2022 Transportation Legislative Agenda for the Toledo Region both support initiatives for a county-wide public transit system to serve the greater Toledo metropolitan area including all of Lucas County. The TMACOG Transportation Council and the TMACOG Public Transit Committee supports language to change the ORC to allow majority consent to add new members to TARTA.

We recognize that a strong region needs a strong public transit system. We appreciate legislative efforts to support public transportation in our region.

Sincerely,

Mark W. Stahl  
Commissioner, Ottawa County  
Chair, TMACOG

Michael A. Aspacher  
Mayor, City of Bowling Green  
Vice Chair, TMACOG

Tim W. Brown  
President

MWS:MAA:TWB:DGG:MB:jc