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Jamaine Alberto Gooding
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Good morning members of the Chicago Transit Authority Board,

My name is Jamaine and I am from Brooklyn, New York. I moved to Chicago two years ago to pursue my M.A in Sustainable Urban Development at DePaul University. While at DePaul I was able to expand on my interests around community, economic and transportation development. I learned about the history of urban planning in a city like Chicago and how very intentional planning strategies are to look at when examining the current state of our city today. I take public transportation daily and basically rely on it to navigate the city. My experiences on transit may differ from many people, but I do understand that it is essential for everyone. I have the privilege of living in an area where transit operates frequently and efficiently. However, I am aware that my experience should be that of everyone's no matter where they live or visit.

Currently, I am working at Active Transportation Alliance where I am a Bus Organizing Fellow. I have surveyed Chicagoans on their experiences on transit during COVID-19 and most recently the CTA city wide shut down. Our goal with these findings is to bring awareness that will lead to impactful change in the communities experiencing transit inequity the most.

Active Transportation Alliance is advocating for a roll out of 10 miles of bus lanes before the end of 2020. This should be part of a COVID-19 response to make essential worker's commutes as safe, fast, and reliable as possible. Black and brown people mainly on the West and South Sides are the ones who rely on and use transit, specifically buses on the West and South Sides, at the peak of the pandemic and stay at home order. Bus lanes are a necessity to ensure Chicagoans stay healthy and safe on their daily commutes.

The Chicago Transit Authority needs to work with Mayor Lori Lightfoot and City Council as well with the Chicago Department of Transportation to implement 10 miles of bus lanes before the end of 2020 and the funding and construction of 20 additional miles by end of 2021 as well as face masks for all transit riders. Universal mask wearing is the easiest and most efficient way to establish and sustain a safe environment for riders still taking transit every single day.

We commend the "Travel Healthy Kit" giveaway program and urge you to find ways to ensure every rider has a mask with support from the City whether that is from continued distribution or installing mask dispensers on every bus and train station

With regards to safety on transit, CTA has a contract with CPD for 10 million per year to patrol CTA. The CTA must re-examine public safety and their relationship with the CPD. Police on public transit is a critical topic and given the social climate of our nation, this re-examination could not come at a better moment than now. Police accountability is a slow and broken process, and the time has passed to where alternative methods of keeping transit riders and operators safe need to be discussed and implemented.



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Thank you for your time and consideration of transportation equity issues as you work to develop the 2021 CTA budget and COVID-19 recovery planning.

Sincerely,

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