**Option 2: For COMTO Members NOT attending VFH/ Meet with Rep./Senator in District Office**

Template Letter from COMTO Member to Members of Congress

Chapter Letterhead – [include high resolution chapter logo download here](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1d5i6q6-QOe_Bekr4JmxYC6oSw6YtxSv-)

August \_\_, 2022

The Honorable

United States Senate

Washington, DC 20510

 or

The Honorable

U. S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator/Representative\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

As a proud member of the **Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO - www.comtonational.org)**, a multi-modal transportation organization headquartered in Alexandria, VA, with 37 chapters across north America and over 3,000 members, I want to personally thank you for your leadership in the U.S. Congress.

**COMTO** was established to ensure opportunities and to provide maximum participation in the transportation industry for minority individuals, veterans, people with disabilities and certified Disadvantaged/Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (D/M/WBEs) through leadership training, professional development, scholarship and internship funding, political advocacy, partnership building and networking opportunities.

The members of our more than 37 COMTO chapters across the country are individuals, students, transportation agencies, corporations, labor unions, academic institutions, industry non-profits and Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs). We are the presidents and chief executive officers who determine the direction of major transportation systems and the mechanics and operators who ensure the safe passage of millions of transportation riders every day. In short, COMTO actively advocates on behalf of hundreds of thousands of people and neighborhoods in the U.S. who are transportation professionals, contractors, laborers and customers. COMTO’s 2022 Legislative Agenda is attached.

This letter comes as both as an introduction to COMTO and an appeal to you, as my Senator/Congressman, to support a strong, cohesive and viable long-term transportation infrastructure policy and funding plan in Congress. We believe that in order to have the greatest economic impact on all communities, this infrastructure policy should be comprehensive, addressing all modes of transportation and conscious of interconnectivity, as well as accessibility and mobility issues. Most importantly, we strongly urge you to support inclusivity of the minority, disadvantaged and disenfranchised communities and businesses in federally funded programs and workforce development initiatives.

Thank you for your attention to these important matters, and I look forward to hearing back from you soon to discuss these critical issues in your district office, as they relate to an overall transportation infrastructure bill that will support the growing needs of transportation for all!

Sincerely,

(Your name here)

COMTO Chapter – (Your Chapter here)

(Your home address and contact information here)

Cc: COMTO Legislative Advisory Council

Attachment: COMTO’s 2022 Legislative Agenda



2022 LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY PRIORITIES

## Workforce Development Initiatives -- Implement policies that would:

* Identify skill gaps, training needs, as well as retraining needs of existing workers
* Address needs of chronically unemployed including minority/female/disabled individuals displaced by new technologies or COVID
* Focus on historically underserved communities
* Establish a Workforce Development Advisory Board at USDOT
* Establish accountability mechanisms for existing workforce development programs, including standardized performance reporting measures
* Set local hiring and training incentives that monetize implementation of workforce programs, giving “weight” to bids and proposals that are inclusive of such actions
* Establish a public sector paid internship program within USDOT
* Educate public about available paid internships and apprenticeships funded by BIL, with incentives to hire program graduates

## Disadvantaged/Minority/Women-owned Business (D/M/WBE) Initiatives:

* Establish a DBE set-aside program based on the 8(a)-program model and identify set-aside for DBE prime competition; unbundle mega-transportation projects to give small D/M/WBEs prime contracting opportunities
* Require “net 30 payment”, meaning the D/M/WBE must be paid within 30 days of the invoice date
* Insurance indemnification or creative solutions to meeting bonding requirements for D/M/WBEs
* Establish a national DBE-certified database at the federal level at USDOT
* Create regional PNW ceilings, modeled after annual DBE goal setting methodology processes, which take into account local cost-of-living. Adjust PNW form to eliminate some asset items, to encourage saving and wealth generation
* Increase in federal overall DBE goals attached to FTA, FAA and FHWA funded projects to more than 10%, a goal out of step with current demographics which has been in place since 1983; same applies to pending FRA DBE program
* Implement consistent and realistic DBE size standards, in keeping with the FAA policies
* Incentivize the USDOT Mentor/Protégé Program and set a “grace period”, to provide assistance to firms through the “gap” years of post-DBE program graduation and encourage capacity building and generational wealth
* Provide support and feedback for the Administration’s Justice40 Initiative which aims to deliver 40 percent of the overall benefits of federal investments in climate and clean energy, including sustainable transportation, to underserved, disadvantaged communities

## Accessibility:

* Highlight urgent need for accessibility and equality for the disabled, including special-needs safety protocol
* Educate employers on the benefits of hiring persons with disabilities including neurodiverse candidates

For additional details on each of these issues, contact info@comtonational.org

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