

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Statewide Summit to Highlight Wisconsin's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Transportation Needs**

*As state budget debate intensifies, Wisconsinites call for focus on local priorities*

**MADISON** – Several hundred community and faith organizers, transit riders, public interest advocates and community leaders will gather in Milwaukee on December 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss the state's transportation needs. The daylong statewide summit, titled *Arrive Together: Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Transportation System for Wisconsin*, will be held at MATC's downtown Milwaukee campus from 9 AM to 5 PM.

The summit will feature a 9:30 AM listening session during which Wisconsinites will share their experiences with the transportation system. At 10:30 AM, keynote speakers Leslie Proll, Director of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Civil Rights, and Aaron Mair, national Sierra Club President will address attendees. The event will conclude with afternoon workshops and panels on the importance of investment in local road and transit infrastructure to support job connectivity, to ensure mobility for the state's aging population, and to create a transportation system that is fair and effective for all in Wisconsin. (See below for a full agenda.)

"As leaders debate raising taxes and fees or borrowing even more to pay for transportation in Wisconsin, we should ensure that our tax dollars are spent in the smartest ways possible, on the things that really matter," said **Peter Skopec, director of the Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group (WISPIRG)**. "We encourage state leaders to focus our transportation spending on local priorities – investing in public transit, filling potholes, and fixing existing highways and bridges."

In Wisconsin, local transportation funding relies heavily on support from state government. Over the last fifteen years, Wisconsin's transportation spending priorities have become [increasingly focused on costly highway expansion programs](#), which has meant greater dependence on borrowing and less funding for maintenance of existing infrastructure and for local priorities – from pothole and bridge repair to investment in public transit that connects people to jobs and services.

"When the transit system cut their Saturday routes down, I had to give up my Saturday shifts, and I also couldn't take any on Sunday since the buses do not run then," said **Ruth Schenk, an in-home care provider from Kenosha**. "The cut in Saturday bus service altered my work week. I had one less day to earn income. No one likes to get less pay."

The *Arrive Together* summit will be held at MATC's downtown Milwaukee campus (700 W State St.; Milwaukee, WI 53233) from 9 AM to 5 PM on Saturday, December 3, 2016 and is open to the public and to the media. The full event agenda is below:

**9:00 AM** – Registration and breakfast. MATC Main Building conference center (M605, 6<sup>th</sup> floor)

**9:30 AM** – Listening session. MATC Main Building conference center (M605, 6<sup>th</sup> floor)

**10:30 AM** – Plenary session w/ keynote addresses by Leslie Proll, Director of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Civil Rights, and by Aaron Mair, National President of the Sierra Club.  
MATC T Building Auditorium

**12:00 PM** – Lunch (*registration required*)

**1:00 PM** – Breakout sessions. MATC Main Building 5<sup>th</sup> floor classrooms

- Transportation Organizing 101 (hosted by Aaron Mair, Sierra Club; Peter Skopec, WISPIRG; David Liners, WISDOM)
- Transportation and Civil Rights (hosted by Leslie Proll, USDOT; Karyn Rotker, ACLU of Wisconsin; Rev. Willie Brisco, WISDOM)
- Connecting Businesses and Wisconsin's Workforce (hosted by Kerry Thomas, MetroGO!; Chuck Kamp, Madison Metro)
- Wisconsin's Aging Population and Mobility for All (hosted by Barbara Beckert, Disability Rights Wisconsin; Huda Alkaff, Wisconsin Green Muslims; Ash Narayanan, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin)
- Engaging State Leaders (hosted by State Rep. Daniel Riemer; former State Sen. Gary Goyke)
- Biking and Equity (hosted by Wisconsin Bike Federation/Milwaukee Path to Platinum Core Committee)

**3:15 PM** – Panel discussion: How You Can Help Build a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Transportation System for Wisconsin, feat. Sharice Davids, USDOT; State Rep. Daniel Riemer; Kathi Zoern, NAOMI/Wausau; Cassie Steiner, Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter. MATC Main Building conference center (M605, 6<sup>th</sup> floor)

**4:00 PM** – Reception. MATC Main Building conference center (M605, 6<sup>th</sup> floor)

*Arrive Together: Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Transportation System for Wisconsin* was organized by WISPIRG, Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, WISDOM and its local affiliates, Wisconsin Green Muslims, and Renew Environmental Public Health Advocates (REPHA).