Building Human Capital and Career Pathways for Public Transportation

Congressional Briefing: Transporting Young Black Men to Quality Careers

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Career Opportunities in a Growing Industry

- Fast job growth in transportation overall, and public transit in particular
  - Transit rail ridership up 75 percent since 1995
  - 38 percent job growth projected over next 10 years
- Up to 40 percent of the transit frontline workforce expected to retire within the next ten years
- Big city agencies face major skill shortages in years ahead, and major transit cities includes large minority populations
Human Capital: Quality Public Transportation Careers

Good Frontline Transit Skilled Jobs and Career Ladders for Urban Youth

• Family-supporting jobs - good wages and benefits
• Career ladders based on further training, education, growth and career advancement
• Careers concentrated in urban communities
• Strong union role in industry, with many Black union presidents and officers
• A green industry, benefitting the community and offering opportunities for specialized training in green technologies

• Transit provides good job opportunities for urban populations – 18.3 percent of frontline jobs nationally are held by African-Americans

• Many big urban systems are becoming majority minority, with New York City Transit at 73 percent

• Less minority access to higher skilled technical jobs – only 4 percent of bus/truck mechanics nationally
Challenges for Transit Workforce Policy

- Overall level of investment in human capital is very low – less than 1 percent of payroll
- Greatest need in transit workforce development: Frontline workers – operations and maintenance workers, 80 percent of transit employees
- April DOT Workforce Summit: Leaders of Railroad, Highway, and Transit – the frontline workforce is our greatest workforce need
Transit Policy Lags in Human Capital Investment

Public Transportation Behind the Curve on Training Investment

Percent of Employee Salary

- US Public Transportation*: $91 m (0.66-0.88%)
- All US Industries: $266 m (2%)
- FHWA Goal: $357 m (3%)
- Leading US Companies: 4.5%
- Paris Transit (RATP): 8.4%

*Estimated by the Transportation Learning Center based on a 2010 survey of the transit industry
Federal Transit Investment in Human Capital

0.1% of Physical Capital

- Annual federal investment in transit workforce development (UTC training, NTI, TLC, SCATTC, Innovative Programs, etc.) – **Total $10.2 million**

- Annual federal investment in physical capital – **Total $9.6 billion**
But Current Surface Transportation Act is Deficient on Human Capital

• Transit Capital Programs do not prioritize investment in human capital (0.5 percent requirement)

• Transit’s workforce development programs need to support Career Pathways for moving community members into quality transportation careers

• Need to link strong Career Pathways with effective Career Ladder programs to move people up within the industry – Philadelphia example
Need to Build Career Pathways Connecting Young Black Men to Quality Transportation Careers

1. Include Human Capital Investment in Transit Capital investment Funding: Raise transit human capital investment to FHWA target: 3 percent of payroll

2. Support Targeted Career Pathways Partnerships connecting Urban Youth to Quality Transportation Careers
   • Partner Schools with Transit Agencies and Unions
     - High schools, middle schools and post-secondary
   • Hands-on and problem-solving approaches to learning
   • Mentoring, job shadowing and internships
   • College credit for standards-based training at work
   • Prepare students for challenging skilled training programs
   • Direct connection to industry career ladder programs
Career Pathways for Young Black Men: Everyone Benefits

- **Young Black Men**: Pathways to high quality jobs linked to career ladders and access to ongoing training and education
- **Schools**: Higher retention, graduation and job placement rates – best practice graduation rates of 98 percent in quality CTE programs
- **Industry**: Quality training meets critical skill needs with strong return on investment. Other transportation sectors (railroad, airline, trucking) have similar skill needs
- **Community**: More people with strong jobs skills and careers. Plus, quality transportation systems improve the environment and access to jobs in the region
More information at www.TransportCenter.org

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