

Government initiative on intercommunity public transportation welcomed, but more work needs to be done

October 31, 2018 (Toronto, ON) – The Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) welcomed today's announcement by the federal government of its involvement in providing alternatives to Canadians affected by intercity bus route closures in Western Canada and Northern Ontario. In its reaction to the announcement, CUTA stressed the importance of implementing long-term, sustainable and interconnected solutions to meet the mobility needs of citizens in these regions.

"I am pleased to see that the federal government has taken the lead in working with the provinces, territories and Indigenous peoples to assess and address the public transportation requirements of Canadians impacted by today's service closures," said Marco D'Angelo, President and CEO of CUTA. "The joint announcement by the federal Ministers of Transport, Indigenous Services and Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs is a good first step and demonstrates the federal government's coordinated commitment to empowering local actors to deliver solutions tailored to local realities."

Effective today, intercity bus route closures for Canadian communities west of Sudbury, Ontario have left many Canadians searching for public transportation alternatives. The service network that had existed for decades played a key role in connecting Canadians to each other, as well as to healthcare, education and economic opportunities in urban environments. In a country as vast as Canada, rural bus services foster social inclusion and provide a lifeline that is difficult to quantify, though invaluable to those who rely on it.

As part of the solution announced today, the federal government will provide funding to provincial and territorial governments over the next two years on a cost-sharing and transitional basis to set up public transportation services in areas impacted by the route closures. Additional support will be provided to Indigenous-owned transportation companies via existing federal programs that encourage Aboriginal entrepreneurship. Ottawa will also continue working with the provinces and territories to explore innovative, longer-term solutions to address regional public transportation needs, focused on emerging technologies, alternative service delivery models and more flexible regulations on bus operators.

"I am delighted that private bus operators, many of which are CUTA members, are stepping in to provide local solutions in their regions," added Marco D'Angelo. "However, there is still work to be done at the federal and provincial levels to identify and implement alternatives for those communities that are not being covered. CUTA will monitor the situation to ensure that no vulnerable groups in rural areas in Western Canada and Northern Ontario are left behind by ongoing developments."

About CUTA

The Canadian Urban Transit Association (<http://cutaactu.ca/>) is the collective and influential voice of public transportation in Canada. CUTA's membership includes the vast majority of Canadian transit systems, private transport operators and transit thought-leaders from across the country. CUTA is uniquely positioned to work with all levels of government to provide industry insights on key transit policy issues affecting Canadians and their communities.

For further information

Chad Jeudy-Hugo
Director, Public Affairs and Strategic Communications
jeudy-hugo@cutaactu.ca
514-207-7072

