



PRESS STATEMENT
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Improved Transportation Budget still falls short

Today, after the Conference Committee reached an agreement regarding the Transportation Budget, Policy Matters Ohio Senior Researcher Amanda Woodrum issued the following statement:

“We needed to raise revenue to make sure Ohioans are safe while they travel on our roads and bridges. It’s encouraging that lawmakers finally recognized this as well as the need to make Ohio’s tax system more fair by reforming the Ohio Earned Income Tax Credit. However, they missed an opportunity to do so much more.

1. **Real EITC reform must include refundability.** Refundable EITCs put more money back in the pockets of more struggling families. The changes made to the credit in the Transportation Budget will only reach 1% more of the poorest Ohioans. Of the 29 states that have EITCs, 23 have refundable credits. [Research shows that families that receive a refundable credit have healthier children who do better in school.](#) EITC reform must include refundability to be effective.
2. **The Transportation Budget has another glaring omission: a lack of funding for public transportation.** Instead of funding transit through the Transportation Budget, the conference committee decided to move \$70 million for transit to the more volatile General Revenue Fund, where if history tells us anything, funding is likely to decline over the long haul. And \$70 million, while a significant improvement, still only amounts to less than 2% of what the state is spending on highways, bridges and roads in the two-year Transportation Budget and half what [ODOT's 2015 Transit Needs Study](#) recommends. Ohio needs a more balanced transportation system, one that includes public transit.

The Ohio legislature took a couple good steps in the right direction. We look forward to working with lawmakers over the next few months to make Ohio’s EITC refundable. Over the long run, we will continue to advocate for further increases in funding for public transit, and putting it back in the transportation budget where it belongs.”