

For immediate release

Statement from the Allegheny Conference on Community Development on State and Local Funding Package to Avert Port Authority Service Cuts

(PITTSBURGH – August 21, 2012) – Allegheny County, the Port Authority of Allegheny County, Amalgamated Transit Union 85 and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have taken a critical step today to assure reliable and competitive transit service for our region. The plan announced today will prevent the severe service cuts that were scheduled to go into effect on September 2.

Governor Tom Corbett and Secretary of Transportation Barry Schoch are to be congratulated for their commitment. So is Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, who responded to the looming crisis by convening the parties to reach a solution, which also includes a commitment of county funding.

Neither of these commitments would have been possible without the leadership of Port Authority CEO Steve Bland and Amalgamated Transit Union Local 85 President Steve Palonis, who negotiated cost-saving measures essential to the long-term viability of the authority and the competitiveness of the region. We also salute the members of Local 85 and all Port Authority employees for their willingness to sacrifice to help fix the system and provide a genuine public service to the residents of our community.

The agreement assures that 20,000 Allegheny County transit riders will not lose their means to travel to work each day. For other motorists, the package will help to assure that congestion on local roadways will not worsen and there will be places to park in Downtown Pittsburgh.

Although critically important, the agreement is just a first step toward a long-term statewide transportation funding solution that covers highways, roads, bridges, transit, ports and rail. Last year, Governor Corbett's Transportation Funding Advisory Commission (TFAC), of which Allegheny Conference CEO Dennis Yablonsky was a member, outlined a realistic and achievable framework for meeting the need for long-term transportation and transit funding.

The Allegheny Conference is committed to working with partners across the region and the state to support the TFAC recommendations and improve transportation infrastructure across the Commonwealth.

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