

**For Immediate Release:** January 27, 2024

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**Philadelphia Mayor Cherelle L. Parker & City Council President  
Kenyatta Johnson Send Letter to Governor Shapiro Urging for  
Increased Funding of SEPTA**

PHILADELPHIA – Today, Mayor Cherelle L. Parker and City Council President Kenyatta Johnson jointly urged Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro to provide appropriate funding and support of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) as it faces significant budget challenges.

The letter as sent to Governor Shapiro states:

January 27, 2024

The Honorable Josh D. Shapiro  
Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
508 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Shapiro:

As Mayor and President of the City Council of Philadelphia, we are writing today to ask for your support of critical funding for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), as it faces significant budget challenges.

SEPTA's one-time federal funding will be fully utilized by April 2024. Starting in FY25, SEPTA is projecting a \$240 million operating deficit, representing 15% of operating expenses. It is crucial that the State increase funding via an increase to the allocation of the Sales Tax from 4.4% to 6.4% for public transportation, without increasing the rate of sales tax, to address this deficit. As Governor and a former county official, we know that you value SEPTA and appreciate the critical role it plays in meeting the mobility needs of our vibrant and diverse region. SEPTA is responsible for transporting each day, 750,000 residents of southeastern Pennsylvania. Without SEPTA's interconnected and unified transit system, covering 2,200 miles of service across five counties, this would not be feasible. Furthermore, without additional investments, SEPTA would be forced to cut service levels and increase fares – setting off a chain of negative consequences for local residents and businesses, the regional economy and over time, Commonwealth tax revenues.

Public transportation plays a pivotal role in fostering sustainable, inclusive, and efficient urban communities. By providing access to reliable and affordable public transportation, residents are ensured access to equal opportunities for education, employment, and social engagement. Public transportation is critical in ensuring a

future that is cleaner, greener, and with equal opportunities for all. In addition, SEPTA's continued operations are also paramount to the success of the Semiquincentennial celebration, when the world will travel to Philadelphia to celebrate the Nation's 250th birthday, as well as other large-scale, high-profile events that will take place in the city in 2026.

We thank you in advance for your time and look forward to your response and continuing our strong partnership. Please know that we are available at any time to discuss the aforementioned.