

Board of Directors

Steven H. Abbey
David A. Abel
Catherine M. Adduci
Allan Ambrose*
A.G. Anglum*
Adrienne Archia*
Murray E. Ascher*
Alicia Berg
Abel E. Berland ☼
Brian A. Bernardoni
Roger Bickel
J.D. Bindenagel
Aileen Blake
Douglas H. Cameron
Whitney Carlisle
Timothy L. Christen
Robert J. Christie
Richard A. Ciccarone*
Jerry Cizek III ☼
Nancy J. Clawson
Lew Collens
Elizabeth G. Coolidge
Mary Culler
Omar Daghestani
Kevork M. Derderian ☼
Julian C. D'Esposito
Jon B. DeVries
Thomas H. Donohoe
Martin L. Eisenberg
Brian D. Fabes
Timothy J. Faerber
Timothy Fair
Stephen B. Friedman
Charles R. Gardner*
Carol W. Garnant ☼
Sarah Garvey*
Anthony Gedeller
Ronald J. Gidwitz
Peter G. Glick
Judith A. Gold*
Andrew F. Gottschalk*
Patrick J. Hagan*
Philip Hale
M. Hill Hammock*
Albert C. Hanna
Patricia M. Holden
Bruce T. Hopple
Margaret Houlihan Smith
Lorna Brett Howard
James H. Kane
William Ketchum
Jim Kranjc*
Betsy LaVelle
Stephen Legatzke
Michael A. Lovett
William Mack*
Glenn Mazade
Thomas McNulty ☼
Fred H. Montgomery*
Timothy E. Moran
Monica M. Mueller
Michael E. Murphy ☼
Bert Nuehring*
Michael F. O'Brien
Holly O'Connor
Gregory O'Leary
Sarah Pang
Robert Pasin
Dorice Pepin
Donovan Pepper
Bruce V. Rauner
Alexander I. Rorker
Scott Saef ☼
John C. Sciacotta
James E. Spiotto*
Caryn Stancik
Barbara Stewart ☼
Eugene S. Sunshine
Theodore M. Swain*
Kent A. Swanson*
Courtney A. Thompson
Thomas C. Vanden Berk
Robert S. Vihon*
Daniel Wagner
Sue E. Wallace*
John F. Ward ☼
Jeffrey D. Warner
Andrew L. Weil
Jerold Wolf
William Young
Philip Zinn*

The Civic Federation

177 North State Street, Suite 400, Chicago, IL 60601 • 312.201.9066 fax 312.201.9041 • civicfed.org



January 13, 2011

The Honorable Pat Quinn
Governor of Illinois
207 Statehouse
Springfield, IL 62706

Re: Senate Bill 3778

Dear Governor Quinn:

The Civic Federation urges you to sign Senate Bill 3778, a bill that will end the Seniors Ride Free program. This program has strained the resources of public transit agencies while allowing seniors who can afford to pay their fair share the ability to ride for free. SB3778 will limit free rides to low income seniors.

The Chicago Transit Authority projects a total of 51 million free rides for seniors in FY2011, up from 49.8 million the previous fiscal year. In a study commissioned by the Regional Transportation Authority, the annualized loss from the Seniors Ride Free program across the three service boards was projected to be between \$25.1 million and \$76.3 million for 2009. The same study projects that the senior population for the Chicago region will double between 2000 and 2030, thereby increasing the annual revenue losses for the program to range between \$58.8 million and \$172.7 million, assuming no increase in fares, by 2030.

There is no sound public policy reason to provide free rides for affluent seniors who are able to pay and help defray the cost of public transit. Exempting such a large pool of individuals from paying their fair share of expenses simply shifts the cost onto other riders, many of whom are low-income workers. The program has contributed to the CTA's multi-million dollar deficit and led to the need for higher fares for all. A far more rational approach to address equity concerns is to provide reduced fares only for low-income riders. In that way, assistance is targeted to those individuals who truly need it.

The Civic Federation recommends that you sign SB3778 into law. Allowing the free rides program to continue without question places an unfair burden on the majority of transit riders to subsidize free rides for others who could afford to pay their fair share.

Sincerely,

Laurence Msall
President

Officers

Thomas Livingston
Chairman
Mark Davis
Vice Chairman
Susan McKeever
Vice Chairman
Eileen Mitchell
Vice Chairman
Joseph B. Starshak
Treasurer
Laurence J. Msall
President
Lise Valentine
Vice President

*Executive Committee
☼ Past Chairmen's Council