

Testimony in Support of HB26-1269
Colorado State Capitol

Good afternoon Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Bianka Emerson, and I am the President of Colorado Black Women for Political Action. I am here today in strong support of House Bill 26-1269.

At its core, this bill is about dignity, access, and opportunity.

Public transportation is not a luxury—it is a lifeline. It connects people to jobs, to school, to healthcare, to childcare, and to community. Yet for far too many Coloradans, especially low-income families, Black and brown communities, seniors, and individuals experiencing homelessness, that lifeline is out of reach.

HB26-1269 takes a comprehensive and thoughtful approach to addressing these barriers.

By requiring low-income fare discounts, this bill acknowledges a simple truth: affordability determines access. If you cannot afford the ride, you cannot access opportunity.

By establishing partner pass programs for individuals experiencing homelessness and households receiving rental assistance, this bill meets people where they are—recognizing that stability begins with mobility.

By improving rider information and language access, this bill ensures that our transit systems reflect the diversity of Colorado. Access is not just about infrastructure—it is about communication, inclusion, and respect.

And finally, by requiring annual reporting on transit access and service improvements, this bill creates accountability. It ensures that we are not just making promises, but delivering measurable progress.

For the communities we serve, transportation inequity is deeply tied to economic inequity. When people cannot reliably move, they cannot fully participate. This bill helps remove those barriers.

HB26-1269 is not just a transportation bill—it is an economic mobility bill, a public health bill, and a racial equity bill.

At Colorado Black Women for Political Action, we believe in building systems that work for everyone, not just a few. This legislation moves us closer to that vision.

I urge you to support HB26-1269 and invest in a more accessible, equitable, and connected Colorado.

Thank you for your time and consideration.