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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

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CHAIRMAN,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC POLICY

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND  
GOVERNMENT REFORM

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

September 24, 2008

Chairman John Conyers, Jr.  
Committee on the Judiciary  
2138 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Conyers:

Yesterday I received a news release from the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) reporting service cuts the authority plans to make on **November 2, 2008, two days before the federal election**. Intentional or not, this action would represent a clear act of voter suppression. Hundreds if not thousands of low and moderate income Clevelanders rely on RTA to travel to and from their polling place.

RTA serves Cuyahoga County, Ohio, which includes the entire City of Cleveland and approximately 58 of its surrounding suburbs. The service area includes the entirety of Ohio's 10th Congressional District which I represent and the entirety of the 11th District which was represented by our late colleague Stephanie Tubbs Jones.

The people of Cuyahoga County depend on RTA to get to and from work, school, health care, shopping, and family obligations. RTA also helps them get to the place where they vote.

I contacted RTA earlier this year to voice my opposition to a series of draconian service cuts and fare increases which I believe would have greatly compromised RTA's ability to serve the people of Northeast Ohio. Public outrage at those actions caused RTA officials to rethink the service cuts and fare increases. While yesterday's announced cuts are not as severe as those originally planned, as recently as yesterday morning at an RTA board meeting, fare hikes and service cuts were not on the agenda.

I oppose these cuts because they will have an adverse effect on the ability of seniors, students, low-income workers, persons with disabilities and others to get around. I also think that service throughout the region is being sacrificed in order to better serve one route called the "Euclid Corridor". I expressed these concerns in a letter to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Inspector General shortly after learning about the service cuts yesterday.

I write to you today because I am deeply concerned about the timing of these cuts. Without prior notice to its board or the public, and just a little more than one month before the election, RTA is now announcing service cuts to go into effect **two days before the election**. These cuts could contribute to the disenfranchisement of many voters in Northeast Ohio. Because of the large number of minority voters in Ohio's 10th and 11th Congressional Districts, there could also be violations of the Help America Vote Act, the Voting Rights Act, and other civil protections our nation affords to its people.

Therefore, I ask that as Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, you raise this issue before the U.S. Department of Justice. Our nation's transit systems must not be manipulated by public agencies in ways which could disenfranchise the people. With the election just weeks away, I ask that you take up this matter with all due urgency.

Thank you for your concern about the voting rights of the people of Northeast Ohio.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dennis J. Kucinich". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Dennis J. Kucinich  
Member of Congress