



***PRT Proposes Service Cuts and a Fare Increase to Close Budget Deficit***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (March 20, 2025)** - With state funding no longer able to meet the needs of Pennsylvania's second-largest transit agency, Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) today announced a 35% service cut that would go into effect in February 2026.

The cuts would be paired with a 25-cent fare increase to help close a projected \$100 million budget deficit. ACCESS, PRT's contracted paratransit service, would see a 62% reduction in its service area and a 20% increase in fares.

The impact of these changes would be felt across our region:

- 40 bus routes and the Silver Line would be eliminated completely.
- Service frequency on 53 bus routes and the Red Line would be reduced.
- 19 municipalities and three Pittsburgh neighborhoods would lose service completely.
- No service after 11 p.m.
- Funding to support extra service for sporting events, concerts, and the 2026 NFL Draft would not exist.

"This truly is a sad day for our region. Public transit is a lifeline for communities throughout and we are not taking this proposal lightly. We have warned that we would face service cuts and fare increases without new funding for the past year, and we remain committed to continuing to fight for the service Allegheny County deserves," said PRT CEO Katharine Kelleman. "This isn't just a Pittsburgh problem. This is an issue facing transit agencies across the Commonwealth. We are not asking Harrisburg to bail us out. We're asking state lawmakers to ensure that the taxes they receive from Allegheny County come back to Allegheny County."

If approved by PRT's Board next Friday, the agency would begin soliciting public feedback on March 31 and hold three public hearings in April, May, and June before the Board adopts next year's budget, which begins in July.

"We started this process early to make sure riders have a voice and a say on these service cuts and fare increases," Kelleman said. "Our hearts break today knowing there could be

significantly less service that connects people to their world. We know these cuts are devastating and we plan to do everything in our power to prevent them from happening."

In addition to eliminating 40 bus routes and the Silver Line, PRT would be forced to reduce service by at least 30% on 33 bus routes and the Red Line and make smaller cuts to 20 additional routes.

Nineteen municipalities in Allegheny, Beaver, and Westmoreland counties — including Ambridge, Ben Avon, East McKeesport, Glenfield, and Trafford — and the Pittsburgh neighborhoods of Banksville, Ridgmont, and Swisshelm Park — would lose service altogether. The 28X-Airport Flyer would terminate in Carnegie.

PRT would also close two bus garages, the Wabash Tunnel, and 10 park-and-ride lots. The Bus Line Redesign, which PRT had hoped would increase transit access and improve efficiency, would not be implemented.

Despite efforts to preserve service for high-ridership and transit-dependent areas, cuts of this scale would inevitably harm vulnerable communities, said PRT's Chief Development Officer Amy Silbermann.

Describing the cuts as "brutal," Silbermann acknowledged they would affect more than just transit riders.

"Less public transit means less access to jobs, schools, and businesses, and more traffic, demand for parking, and pollution caused by more cars on the road," Silbermann said.

The proposed fare increase of 25 cents would raise the base fare to \$3, making it among the most expensive in the country.

PRT filled a \$50 million budget gap this year using its reserve fund, but with the agency's deficit expected to grow to \$100 million in FY26 and increase every year without a new source of state funding, even the agency's reserves are not enough.

And although Act 89 of 2013 provided a long-term funding solution for Pennsylvania transportation programs (highways, bridges and mass transit), PRT's share has not increased in over a decade. Rising costs due to inflation, healthcare, and other operational expenses have widened the gap. Federal COVID-19 relief funding temporarily delayed the crisis, but those funds have now been exhausted.

Even Governor Shapiro's proposal to increase the public transit share of the state sales tax, which could generate an additional \$40 million for PRT, would fall short of what PRT needs to maintain current service.

"This is a crisis, not just for PRT, but for people across Allegheny County. Even if you don't ride public transit, you likely know and rely on someone who does," Kelleman said, encouraging all riders and stakeholders to participate in the public comment process. "We hope that our voices are heard in the state Capital and we're able to bring greater investment to public transit back home."

Details on the proposed changes are available at [www.ridePRT.org/funding-crisis](http://www.ridePRT.org/funding-crisis).

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