

Resolution of the Mid-America Association of State Transportation Officials (MAASTO) to Advance Racial Justice in Transportation

WHEREAS, the United States Constitution is the basis of the American dream, the promise of freedom, equal opportunity and prosperity for all people; and

WHEREAS, as the leaders of state departments of transportation that comprise the Mid-America Association of State Transportation Officials (MAASTO), we are responsible for ensuring compliance with the laws that govern our departments, including the advancement of equity, equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion for individuals within our respective departments, regardless of race or ethnicity or membership in any protected class; and

WHEREAS, it is our duty to serve as stewards of inter-modal transportation systems that achieve economic, environmental, and social goals set by the administrations and people we serve including underserved and underrepresented populations; and

WHEREAS, our commitment acknowledges that the actions of the past, in programming, planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance of state transportation systems has disproportionately negatively affected some of the communities we serve, and the legacy of those actions persist in disparities today; and

WHEREAS, the member DOTs of MAASTO have committed to non-discrimination policies and practices and further aspire beyond minimum compliance to demonstrate a strong commitment to the spirit of the Civil Rights Act and related acts of law to promote equality in the hiring and promotion of employees for their respective workforces; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that we must address racism, bigotry and other discrimination; and

WHEREAS, we embrace the rich and distinctive historic and demographic identities of our respective states and commonwealth and that many of the diverse forebearers of our citizenry today are survivors of generations of poverty and oppression in search of employment, access to economic opportunities and social equity; and

WHEREAS, it has been documented that minority populations have been historically underrepresented in the workforces of each MAASTO DOT, and

WHEREAS, as policy makers, we are committed to listen, learn, and take effective action to combat institutional or other impediments that harms our workforce and the communities we serve, while strengthening our stand to promote diversity, equality, and inclusion in all aspects of our internal and external activities; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Board of Directors of Mid-America Association of State Transportation Officials, will approach these efforts with humility and respect, mindful of the importance of listening to and learning from others to assist in efforts to provide the promise of freedom, equal opportunity and prosperity for all people under our laws and constitution. We understand that these measures depend on collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, including government, transportation partners, and the communities we serve. We

pledge to continue to work with national, state, regional and local organizations, and forge new partnerships to advance the following:

- (1) Renewing our commitment to the values acclaimed in the Civil Rights Act and related laws which seek to protect all people from discrimination, and advance goals supportive of those values in the delivery of our programs, services and benefits to our workforce, business partners, communities and organizations.
- (2) Enhancing decision-making processes to broaden inclusion, aspiring to expand beyond minimal compliance with requirements in employment, environmental justice, contracting and other areas by focusing on advancing socio-economic opportunities in all projects, policies and programs.
- (3) Removing obstacles that interfere with the hiring, retention and promotion of a diverse workforce.
- (4) Emphasizing more effective public engagement, with attention towards historically underserved and underrepresented communities.
- (5) Informing funding decision makers about the importance of equitable transportation appropriations for the benefit of all communities we serve, particularly the impacts to historically underserved and underrepresented communities.
- (6) Mitigating disproportionate harmful environmental impact on underserved and underrepresented communities caused by historical transportation planning efforts and promoting better solutions in future transportation planning.
- (7) Improving contracting and procurement practices to remove barriers and create opportunities for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, women, and minorities and other socio-economic disadvantaged individuals or groups so that they may participate in the economic benefits derived from transportation investments.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be preserved in the records and minutes of the MAASTO and prominently displayed on the MAASTO website.

Adopted by the MAASTO Board of Directors on 19 July 2021.