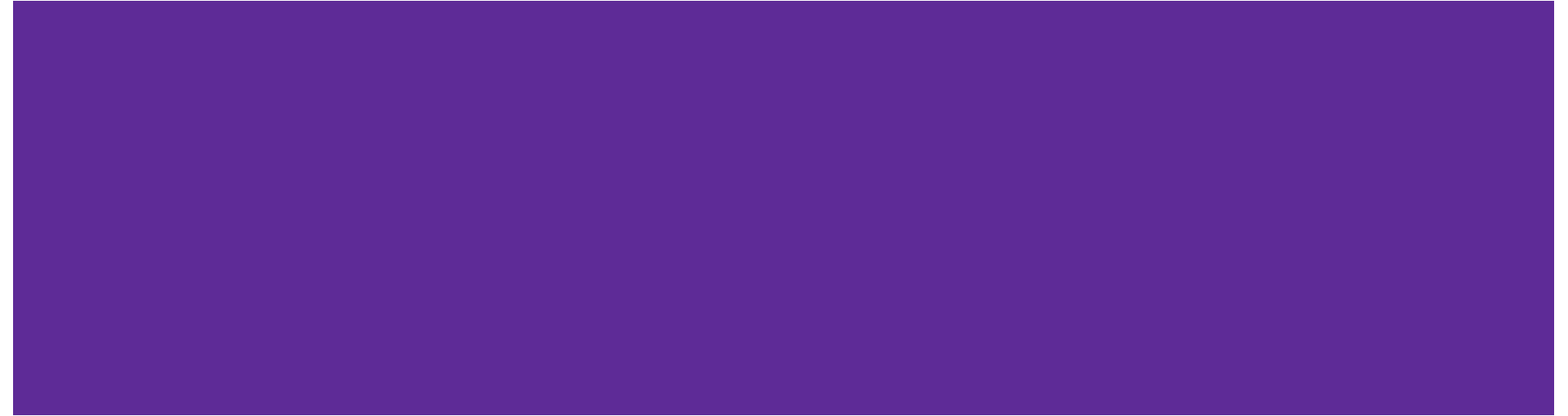


# Transit Rider Representation on Transit Governance Boards

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# Transit Boards Overview

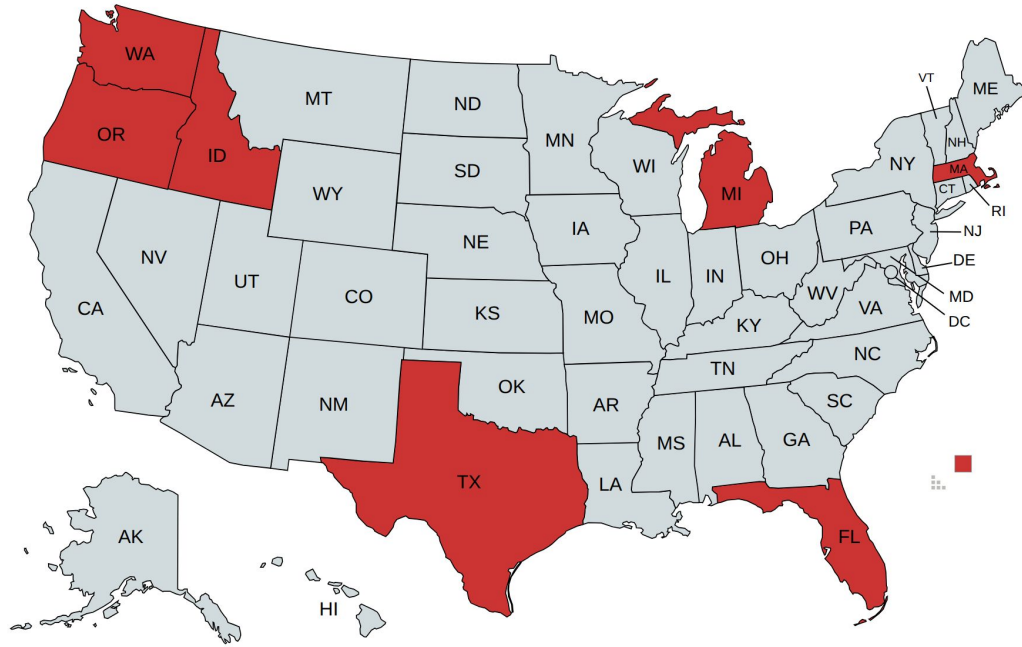
- governing entities for most transit agencies
- commonly 7-10 members
- composition determined by state law
- appoint CEO, make policy decisions

# Issues With Representation

- often don't ride transit
- different demographics than riders

# Motivation: Washington State

- 1975: law passed, PTBAs have boards composed of elected officials
- 1983: update passed allowing community representatives in agencies that had previously had them
- 2025: another update allowing all agencies to add two rider representatives



# Overview: Types of Boards

**60%** - appointed by elected officials

**17%** - elected to other positions

**11%** - no board

**5%** - hybrid elected/appointed

**4%** - other appointee

**3%** - directly elected

# Appointed Boards - Example 1

## TriMet (Portland, OR)

- Oregon Mass Transit District
- 7 members appointed by governor
- from equal-population districts
- one must be rider
- 2024 records request: 4/7 members never rode transit

# Appointed Boards - Example 2

## MBTA (Boston, MA)

- most members appointed by governor
- detailed breakdown of board member characteristics
  - one rider from environmental justice population
  - one selected from list provided by AFL-CIO
  - one with experience in safety
  - one with experience in transportation operation
  - one with experience in finance

# Appointed Boards - Example 3

## VIA (San Antonio, TX)

- members appointed by principal municipality (San Antonio), county, and surrounding cities
- one appointee represents transit disadvantaged
- other appointees had connections to transit-dependent communities

# Appointed Boards - Example 4

## Kalamazoo Metro (Kalamazoo, MI)

- board composition determined in articles of incorporation
- appointed by county Board of Commissioners
- should be “representative of public transportation interests”
- website only lists board member names

# **Local Official Boards - Example 1**

## **Alamo Regional Transit (San Antonio Area, TX)**

- operated by Alamo Area Council of Governments
- more than 30 mayors, judges, and other officials

# Local Official Boards - Example 2

## LYNX (Central Florida)

- one of three authorities directly provided for in FL statute
- board members are elected officials with some flexibility

# Hybrid Boards - Example 1

## Valley Regional Transit (Boise, ID)

- elected or appointed representatives of relevant jurisdictions
- can vote to change own composition
- no rules about rider representation

# Hybrid Boards - Example 2

## Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (Cape Cod, MA)

- advisory board - fewer responsibilities than most boards
- town managers or their designated representatives
  - many designees have other local government roles
- one rider representative, one disabled commuter representative

# Directly Elected Board - Example 1

## Umpqua Public Transit District (Douglas County, OR)

- embroiled in scandal:
  - “America First” takeover
  - election denial
  - CEO resignation
  - Secretary of State investigation
  - lawsuit
- had already had compliance issues before this

# Takeaways

1. Appointed boards have more opportunities for representation
2. More transparency about board composition is needed
3. Community engagement and advocacy are still important

**Questions?**