Dear (insert name of elected official),

I am writing about my concern over a proposal by FL Rep. Michael Owens to dismantle the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) Authority and create a replacement agency to serve only the City of Tampa, a Tampa Transit Authority. The rationale according to Owens and Hillsborough County Commissioner Josh Wostal is that residents of unincorporated Hillsborough County should not have to pay property taxes for a service primarily used by Tampa residents. This proposal could cut transit service for more than 1 million residents in unincorporated Hillsborough County including communities such as:

* **Northwest:** Carrollwood, Keystone, Lutz, Cheval
* **Southshore:** Riverview, Apollo Beach, Ruskin, Gibsonton
* **East:** Brandon, Valrico, Seffner, Mango, Thonotosassa
* **West:** Westchase, Town 'n' Country, Citrus Park, Egypt Lake-Leto

**Who Will Be Impacted?**

* **Essential Workers**: healthcare, hospitality, service industry, and more
* **Students**: commuting to colleges, high schools, training programs and extracurricular activities
* **Seniors & Riders with Disabilities**: who depend on paratransit and bus service for vital services

The City of Tampa population is over 400,000 (2024 Census) while Hillsborough County boasts over 1.5 million residents.

While the proposal allows for agreements, it could lead to reduced or eliminated services in less densely populated areas if the county chooses not to fund them. According to HART data, nearly half of ridership and most paratransit trips occur outside Tampa city limits.

(Give example if you can as to how this would affect you).

As a paratransit rider, the service in the past has been a life-saver getting me to work at USF from downtown Tampa and to medical appointments across town. All citizens of Hillsborough County deserve access to public transit services throughout the County. Please do not support a proposal to dismantle HART.

Respectfully,

Your name and maybe the district you live in