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“Hip Hop” Voter Bus Ready to Roll **Alameda County and AC Transit Join to Register Young Voters**

OAKLAND – Alameda County and AC Transit are hitting the road together again this fall with a unique Voter Registration Bus that is designed to attract more people — particularly younger voters — into the elections process.

In a unique alliance, AC Transit and the County are setting out to register as many voters as possible — using a Voter Registration Bus with an eye-catching, “hip hop” design. The bus, believed to be the only one its kind in the nation, will travel throughout the county to make registering to vote for the November election as easy as possible.

Typically, the vehicle has been dispatched to senior centers, street fairs, sporting events and other community gatherings. But along with those usual stops, this year special efforts will be made to go where potential young voters are: outdoor concerts, college campuses and other locations.

“In this election year, when presidential candidates have raised the level of involvement and excitement among so many young voters, it is appropriate that Alameda County and AC Transit join forces to encourage full participation from young people,” said AC Transit Assistant General Manager Mary King.

The bus was unveiled at a kickoff event at the Alameda County Administration Building with praise from Alameda County supervisors, hip hop spoken word artists and a host of young people boarding the bus to register to vote.

The exterior design of the bus — with individual images of young people and the theme, “**Your Voice. Your Power. Your Choice. Your Vote**” — was created after consultations with youth groups interested in updating the bus in ways that would attract a younger demographic.



The registration effort is the latest voter outreach collaboration between AC Transit and Alameda County. In 2006, the County approached AC Transit about a mobile polling place. AC Transit was very supportive and broke new ground by converting a bus that was out-of-circulation into a mobile polling place with portable electronic voting machines that allowed voters to cast their ballots on the bus during the weeks before Election Day. Due to new State election security regulations however, we found a better use for the bus -- to encourage and facilitate voter registration.

With soaring community interest in the presidential race, a host of ballot measures and local races, Alameda County officials approached AC Transit earlier this year asking to rekindle the election-season partnership. Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson says the partnership will do everything it can to help East Bay residents engage in November's election.

"We think the bus is a great way to reach voters in communities that are often disenfranchised by the political process," said Carson, a key supporter of the Alameda County-AC Transit partnership. "I am excited at the prospect of boosting voter turnout in the upcoming historic election."

The spacious bus is equipped with chairs and tables to allow potential voters to complete registration forms in a comfortable place. Rows of passenger seats have been removed to provide voters with extra space. In addition, there is a lift on the bus to provide handicapped access.

The bus is being hailed as an exciting new tool in ongoing efforts to increase public participation in elections in Alameda County.

"Never in recent memory has a presidential election captured the attention of citizens such as this one has and we are pleased to work with AC Transit in creatively delivering voter registration services at events and activities where many of our future voters may be found," said Scott Haggerty, president of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors.

Susan S. Muranishi, County Administrator states that, "AC Transit has always been a great community partner. The voter registration bus shows how two agencies like Alameda County and AC Transit can accomplish great things when they work collaboratively."

The schedule of events involving the bus is being updated. For the latest schedule, check the AC Transit website, www.actransit.org, or the Alameda County website, www.acgov.org.
