

Transportation

DRW supports improved transportation solutions that address the severe lack of adequate, accessible transportation and that support independence and life in the community.

***Why:** Transportation is vital to an independent life in the community and allows people with disabilities to work and caregivers to provide care. The need for transportation services continues to grow as the population eligible for these services has increased. Increased transportation needs have coincided with reduced funding over the past decade. Cuts in transportation aids have resulted in reduced routes and/or increased fares that have then reduced access and isolated many people with disabilities, denying them independence and access to employment, education, healthcare, shopping, schools, churches and other community resources.*

Many people with disabilities have identified the lack of adequate, affordable transportation as the primary barrier to meeting basic needs, getting to medical appointments, and securing and maintaining employment. Nearly half of transit use is for work-related purposes.

Key Principles:

- Transit funding should remain in the segregated transportation fund to ensure that these funds are protected and not in competition with Medicaid, education, and other priorities.
- Proposal: Preserve the state investment in local transit by restoring Transit Operating Aids. Research shows a net return on investment for transit increases. (\$18.8 million annually).
- Proposal: Increase funding for the County and Tribal Specialized Transportation Assistance Program for older adults and people with disabilities. The Department of Transportation's proposal is a start to addressing the need; however, the increasing population eligible for these services justifies a greater investment. (Sec. 85.21 by \$965,400; Sec. 85.22 by \$132,000 annually).
- Proposal: Create a state level transportation coordinating committee to address successful transportation outcomes and effective use of resources. The committee should include DOT and DHS as well as other state agencies who operate, support, or need transportation services for program success. Effectively coordinating transportation can be the best way to overcome barriers and lead to cost savings for both the individual and the state. (No cost).
- Proposal: Promote regional and local coordination through increasing funding for mobility management, as recommended by Governor Walker's Transportation Finance and Policy Commission and allow the creation of regional transit authorities to reduce artificial barriers at county lines. (\$2.5 million annually).
- Proposal: Establish an independent ombudsman to ensure that people with disabilities who use Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) have true recourse and independent advocacy if the system is not meeting their needs. (\$165,000 annually).