Rural Transportation Advocacy: The Success Story
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Word from the Executive Director ................................................................. 3
Introduction.................................................................................................. 4
   Building a Transportation Alliance....................................................... 4
The Advocacy Experience – What was learned in the Project..................... 6
Identifying the Problem............................................................................. 10
Formation of the PA Transportation Alliance ........................................ 11
   Advocacy Activities................................................................................ 12
Roadblocks and Breaking Barriers............................................................ 14
   Getting Results..................................................................................... 16
   Major Victory....................................................................................... 16
   Formula for Success............................................................................. 17
Contact Information.................................................................................. 18
Appendix..................................................................................................... 19

Newspaper Articles for Freedom Ride ’95
   PA Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities
   Disabled Hit the Ground Running
   LIFT to Participate in “Freedom Ride”
   Rural People with Disabilities Fight for Improved Transportation
   Freedom Ride ’95 Heads to Harrisburg
   Letter from an Advocate

Promotional Materials
   Statewide Summit Meeting on Rural Transportation for People with Disabilities
   PA Transportation Alliance is Launched
   Summary of Statewide Summit Meeting on Rural Transportation

Legislative Advocacy
   Senate Bill No. 1236 (Session of 1998)
   Disability Budget Agenda 2003-04
   Letter from Advocate
   Proclamation
   Board of Commissioners Letters
   Examples of Advocacy Events

Newspaper Articles for Rolling Justice 2000 Campaign
   Rolling for Justice – Rally along State Street
   Rolling Through the County
   Got Milk! Need Transportation!
   Photos of Capitol Display

A Call for Action
   Information Gathering Forum Videoconference
   Shared Ride Bill 1066 Cartoon Caption
   Transportation Defense Fund Please Contribute
   Action Alert for Quantitative Data
Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Study
   Letters to House Members
Status Report on Launching a Pilot Program
News Release Announcing Study from DOT
TAC Final Report
Pilot Project Descriptions

Pilot Project Impact
   How Transportation Service Is Used (48% Work Related)
Flyer Announcing Availability of Program
Letters from Advocates
Letter from Secretary of Transportation Brad Mallory
Letters of Support to Governor
Map of Counties Served by Program
Word from the Executive Director

The Center for Independent Living of Central Pennsylvania hopes this informative manual is useful to its readers. Included in it is a collection of what we have learned over the last few years as we fought a good fight to improve accessible, affordable transportation for people with disabilities, especially in rural areas. It is by no means a step-by-step how to manual. It is however, a strong foundation to build upon as you tackle the ever-growing unawareness that without accessible, affordable transportation, people with disabilities do not have an equal playing field that will allow for full participation in society. We wish you well in your fight and feel free to call upon us.

Theotis W. Braddy
Executive Director
Introduction

Building a Transportation Alliance

The Pennsylvania Transportation Alliance is a statewide grassroots advocacy organization. Created in 1996, the purpose is to maintain and expand transportation options for people with disabilities in Pennsylvania who live in areas outside of public bus transportation. Advocates in Pennsylvania have worked over the past several years on a resolution to this dilemma which included legislation, working with local and state officials, especially in the PA Department of Transportation, and the creation of an alliance of grassroots advocates, transportation providers and others interested in improving rural transportation.

Pennsylvania is not the only state affected by the lack of affordable, accessible rural transportation for persons with disabilities. However, the Pennsylvania Transportation Alliance has gained the experience necessary to offer other states technical assistance to establish networks of interested people to work on similar issues regarding rural transportation for people with disabilities. The Alliance proposes within this manual to share successful strategies the organization has used in order to increase the availability of affordable rural transportation available to people with disabilities. The years of concentrated advocacy by Pennsylvania’s network of people with disabilities, agencies and members who make up the Alliance, has created techniques that can be duplicated from state to state, and it is with this desire this advocacy manual has been composed.
The manual is broken down into sections that deal with specific aspects of the advocacy process, and will list specific ideas and activities an Alliance can use, while including documentation in each section of the PA Transportation Alliance effort.

This project was made possible through grant funding from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities.
The Advocacy Experience – What was learned in the Project

The Pennsylvania Transportation Alliance developed from the advocacy efforts of people with disabilities around the state that, unsatisfied with transportation services that existed for people with disabilities, united to work on the issue. In areas of the state served by fixed route buses and the ADA required complementary para-transit, advocates were having difficulty enforcing their rights with issues as basic as trying to catch a ride on a bus with a broken lift, or para-transit which was not available for next day service. However, none of the issues with fixed route service compared with the plight of people with disabilities in rural Pennsylvania who have no accessible, affordable way to access transportation.

Pennsylvania is unique because a shared ride transportation system exists in every county. This public transportation program is funded primarily by the state’s lottery and benefits seniors over 65 years old by subsidizing the cost of their ride by 85%. However, the cost of the ride is prohibitive to people with disabilities. The PA Transportation Alliance has been involved in leading the community over the past years to write legislation that would offer a similar subsidy to people with disabilities who could be served by this same shared ride system. Obviously, getting legislation introduced and passed is a goal requiring unwavering support and commitment of the community. Unequivocally the most important thing learned in the PA Transportation Alliance project was the power of grassroots advocates to mobilize into action on issues of value to them. From the beginning of the PA Transportation Alliance, recruitment of grassroots advocates has been an important goal, primarily because the people most qualified to advocate for transportation are people in need of the service. Agencies, providers and
local officials have been helpful in moving the issue of affordable, accessible transportation for people with disabilities, but grassroots advocates, spread throughout the state, have created an awareness on every level which has directly influenced the success of every project undertaken by the Alliance, especially the shared ride bill.

The PA Transportation Alliance unified people around the state to work on the issue of affordable, accessible transportation for people with disabilities, including grassroots advocates, a key element to its success. It was learned in the beginning that all parties - individuals, agencies, PennDOT, the state - had a role to play in the transportation issue. Those roles varied, but all were important to the success of the project. Examples include agencies that organized letter-writing campaigns to senators, individual people with disabilities visiting legislators in local offices, making phone calls, providers making connections with the disability community to influence a bill that made sense for providers and consumers and even protests. All roles had influence and the Alliance was able to effectively draw together those participants to see that value.

The disability community determined that legislation would be the most effective way a program could be guaranteed to begin to deal with the issue of affordable transportation. The community made inroads with elected officials and the administration regarding the importance of the legislation, however, there continues to be concerns regarding the cost of a statewide program that influences support of legislation. These concerns were solidified in a meeting addressing the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) from the Secretary of Transportation in 1999. The Secretary announced a study was to be conducted to determine quantitative data such as where people with disabilities live, where they want to go, how often they wish to travel etc. The
information learned during the study did indeed confirm that people with disabilities in rural Pennsylvania do not currently have access to affordable transportation. The data also shared information about where people were likely to go and how often - volunteer work, two days a week, etc. The study process built a steady relationship between PennDOT, the consulting agency and people with disabilities around the state, especially those who personally participated in stakeholder meetings.

The disability community learned from this process the direct result of their advocacy. PennDOT and the other state agencies involved in the issue were educated as to the need for the service, and people with disabilities have been seen as the constituents they are. For the last few years advocates have been involved in crafting shared ride legislation, participating in meetings to get legislation introduced, and continuing to work with local legislators to impress upon them the need for affordable transportation. The disability community, from small towns to large cities, has been committed and involved in advancing the issue of available, affordable, accessible transportation for all Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

What was learned in this project is that transportation providers want to do a good job serving their customers with disabilities. They will work as part of an alliance to expand services in rural Pennsylvania and they support shared ride legislation. Providers participated with the Alliance by attending meetings, providing input on legislation, and sanctioning shared ride legislation through the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association (PPTA).
What was learned in this project is that PennDOT and many state legislators were unaware of transportation issues as they relate to people with disabilities until advocates began to educate the Department and their legislators about the issue. A real working relationship with the PA Department of Transportation was an unexpected and positive outcome as a result of the project. In the past the Department would send the Deputy Secretary to functions where attendance was requested, but it was difficult to get the Department to see people with disabilities as a constituency they were responsible for serving. This issue was resolved as PennDOT and the Transportation Advisory Committee actively worked with the community to secure information during the study process and the recommended pilot.

And, most importantly, what was learned from this project is the strength of grassroots advocates to work tirelessly on transportation issues, improving services already in existence and working for rural shared ride services. This foundation will be the basis over the next few years to secure the advances already made, such as the “Persons with Disabilities Rural Shared Ride Program,” and continue to work for a statewide shared ride program for all people with disabilities in Pennsylvania.
Identifying the Problem

Through a statewide grant program, advocates in every Pennsylvania Center for Independent Living (CIL) began organizing local groups of people with disabilities to work on local and statewide issues. At the same time, a Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) funded project, the Transportation Advocacy Project, was organizing and facilitating transportation roundtables in regional areas around the state. The overwhelming issue of a majority of groups, specifically in rural areas of the state, was a lack of accessible, affordable transportation. The issue was far-reaching and profound. Without transportation, people in rural communities were unable to get a job or go to a training program, and many people were unable to consistently obtain medical treatment, or groceries. Many people with disabilities in rural Pennsylvania stated they felt like prisoners in their own homes, dependent upon the goodwill of families and friends to chauffer them around.

Advocates determined to hold a public hearing in the state capitol. With the financial assistance of several statewide advocacy based organizations, Freedom Ride ’95 was launched. The Pennsylvania House and Senate Transportation Committee public hearing drew together about 200 people with disabilities to testify about their transportation needs and how a lack of transportation affected their lives. The event sparked a transportation initiative that continues to this day.

Prior to the event, each area prepared and sent press releases to the media. Copies of materials from Freedom Ride ’95 in the appendix of the manual show how an event can be organized and documented.
Formation of the PA Transportation Alliance

The PA Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) has been an active participant in the transportation advocacy effort. They have funded transportation advocacy projects and in 1996 the DDC funded “Transportation Advocacy Project” organized a statewide summit meeting on rural transportation for people with disabilities. The two-day event brought together consumers, advocates, transportation providers and policy makers from around the state to –

- share information
- develop possible solutions
- plan action strategies
- organize a statewide transportation alliance to improve transportation for people with disabilities in rural and small town areas of Pennsylvania.

This event was the kick-off of the official Pennsylvania Transportation Alliance. Materials in the appendix show the history of the summit and the resulting “action outcomes.”
Advocacy Activities

The PA Transportation Alliance organized multiple events over the next several years to draw attention to the lack of affordable transportation in rural Pennsylvania for people with disabilities, including writing and introducing legislation. One organization instrumental to the success of the Alliance is the Disability Budget Coalition. Each year, the Coalition assembled an agenda of disability specific programs funded within each Pennsylvania Department and made budget requests. Advocates would take the budget agenda to meetings with Department Secretaries and lay out the case for increased funding in the programs. An example of the budget agenda and the initial legislation is included in the materials found in the next several pages.

- Legislative activities including meetings with legislators in local offices.
- Statewide legislative activities included rallies in the State Capitol.
- Advocates delivered Valentines to all legislative offices declaring “Happy Valentine’s Day” – Support Shared Ride – We request your support of the “Persons with Disabilities Shared Ride Program Act.”
- Absentee citizen campaign. “I would have attended this event but I did not have transportation.” These absentee citizen forms were attached to a homemade bus, and pulled thru the Capitol to be delivered in the Governor’s office.
- Regional roundtable events were held around the state to draw together transportation providers, local elected officials, agency representatives and people with disabilities in rural communities interested in affordable transportation.
The biggest event organized by the Alliance was called ROLLING JUSTICE 2000. It started with an idea from one Alliance advocate to march across the state.

- Kicking off in three corners of the state, the event became a relay that would eventually end in Philadelphia, with a rally at the Liberty Bell.
- Every community involved in the relay devised their own advocacy event and invited the media.
- Events included rallies in town squares, picnics hosted with local officials, advocates riding a “low-boy” eighteen-wheeler from the county line into the town in the next county, a County Commissioner driving a tractor attached to a hay wagon filled with advocates and decorated with signs declaring the need for affordable transportation, and introduction of Amanda the cow, photographed with a young woman in a wheelchair holding onto her rope. The caption, “Got Milk, Need Transportation.”
- This photo provided another opportunity. Upon completion of ROLLING JUSTICE 2000, advocates spent a week displaying the photos and media in the State Capitol. The photo was copied unto mouse pads, stickers and t-shirts. The mouse pads were delivered to every legislative office. A press conference was held in the State Capitol with the display as the backdrop.
Roadblocks and Breaking Barriers

As advocacy activities progressed, the message began getting through to policy makers in Pennsylvania. There was recognition of the problem – but reluctance to pursue legislation because of the potential cost. The issue came to the forefront of the Pennsylvania Transportation Advisory Committee.

- The committee recommended a study of the lack of affordable transportation for people with disabilities.
- Before the Department could consider expanding the current shared ride program subsidy to include people with disabilities, they needed quantifiable data to find out where people with disabilities live, where they would travel and how often they would travel, in an effort to project the costs of such a program.
- Advocates were very upset by this response. There had been studies published in the past that documented the need and advocates felt the cost to do another study was not justifiable, further delaying fixing the real problem.
- There were many responses to the dilemma, calling legislators, asking DOT to change their minds, and some people protested the Department of Transportation in an act of civil disobedience. However, the study proceeded.

Advocates who were part of the Transportation Alliance decided that since the study would take place, that the Alliance would get very involved with the State Transportation Advisory Committee process to have as much influence on the development of the study as possible.

- This was a very good response.
- Advocates around the state were invited to meetings.
• They participated in developing a survey that was presented in eight counties.

• Advocates developed a working relationship with the PA Department of Transportation that has continued to the present time.

PA’s Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) found:

“...substantial unmet transportation needs in rural areas and the lack of transportation services limits or restricts a large percentage of persons with disabilities from participating in a wide range of activities.”
Getting Results

- The TAC launched an 18-month pilot project in 8 counties.
- The pilot was endorsed by TAC and formally adopted by the State Transportation Commission.
- It was aimed at gathering information on usage/costs from 6 providers to determine the feasibility of going statewide.
- The projected cost of the pilot - $3 million dollars.

Major Victory

- The Pilot Project was expanded to 16 additional counties in 2003.
- A $3 million dollar allocation was allotted in the General Fund budget for the program, with $1.2 million reserved for the original 8 counties and $1.8 million allocated for an expansion.
- Providers responded to a request for proposals from the Department of Transportation. 22 applications were received 12 were funded for a total of 16 counties.
- Over half of the program trips since the beginning of the pilot program are WORK-related.
Formula for Success

The Pennsylvania Transportation Alliance raised awareness, took action and created change.

ALL FORMS OF ADVOCACY USED

Grassroots organizing AND action

In developing your transportation alliance it is important to remember that all interested parties are important to invite to the table. Within this diversity there will be persons who will become involved in different aspects of moving the issue forward. Be open to the roles that advocates are interested and comfortable playing. Encourage them by setting examples of how each level of advocacy can be pursued whether it is local legislative meetings, a phone call to a local Senator, or organizing a letter writing campaign. Remember, every person has a role.

Statewide collaboration

It is very important to look at your statewide advocacy partners and encourage networking to include those who may be partners on the issue in the future. Even if it appears as if a particular individual or agency does not fit the “traditional” advocate role, invite them to participate if they are interested in pursuing transportation advocacy in your state.

Persistence!

It is not easy to express a need and expect statewide adoption of the solution, especially if it involves a funding allocation. If your idea is new and untested, administration officials will find it difficult to fund, even if they support the concept. It is
important to continue working through these barriers. With continued advocacy, elected
officials and the administration may be able to embrace the issue and find financial
resources to provide the service. Most importantly, don’t give up!

Contact Information

If you are interested in more information regarding grassroots transportation advocacy or
have comments regarding the materials, please contact the Center for Independent Living
of Central Pennsylvania (CILCP) at 717-731-1900, 207 House Avenue, Camp Hill, PA

This manual was made possible by a grant from The Administration on Developmental
Disabilities (ADD). Information on ADD can be found at

Many hardworking people with and without disabilities have contributed to the success of
affordable, accessible transportation in Pennsylvania and we offer our thanks to them all.
Ginny Rogers is one of those individuals. Although she is no longer the Coordinator of
the Pennsylvania Transportation Alliance and employed by the Center for Independent
Living of Central PA, her commitment and dedication to the cause lives on.

The Transportation Alliance is a statewide advocacy organization committed to
improving transportation for people with disabilities in Pennsylvania. The Transportation
Alliance has written legislation, which successfully passed in June 2001, organized
grassroots involvement in numerous advocacy events to draw attention to the need for
rural transportation, and successfully worked with the state’s Department of
Transportation to implement an 8 county pilot program in 2001, which has been
expanded into 16 additional counties in the 2002-2003 budget year.

For further information on the PA Alliance, contact John Tassone at the CILCP, 207
House Avenue, Suite 107, Camp Hill, PA 17011. 717-731-1900, 1-800-323-6060,
jtassone@cilcp.com
Appendix
PA COALITION OF CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES

FREEDOM RIDE '95

(On September 20, 1995, over 200 rural Pennsylvanians with disabilities marched through downtown Harrisburg to the State Capitol for a public hearing on accessible, affordable transportation. Following are some thoughts on the hearing and on transportation for rural Pennsylvanians with disabilities)

One by one they came forward and testified, each person taking about three minutes to tell a unique story. As the hours ticked away, however, it became clear that the people in the public hearing room of the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building were painting the same picture. Each person’s remarks a brush stroke on a canvas that became a not so pretty picture of what life in rural Pennsylvania is like when people can’t freely travel about. It was a story about life in rural Pennsylvania where transportation for thousands of people with disabilities is a fantasy, something desired but unfathomable.

At the brickyard in Indianapolis cars now go so fast that five hundred miles is gobbled up in less time than it takes to smoke a mediocre cigar. Jets zip around the globe farther and faster than ever before; unnoticed, routine. If you want to cross the English channel these days, you can take a train under the channel. Rumor has it that astronauts can actually see smog clouds hovering above the globe when they take the space shuttle out for a spin.

In contrast, thousands of rural Pennsylvanians with disabilities are trapped at home because the assistive technology (e.g. lifts), is either not available or, where the technology is available, it costs potential consumers two bucks a mile or more. That’s a lot of money when you live on a fixed income. And, too many people live on fixed incomes partly because affordable, reliable and accessible transportation does not exist in rural Pennsylvania.

Yes it will cost money to provide a good system of transportation for rural Pennsylvanians with disabilities. Some people will say we can’t afford to do it. We say we can’t afford not to do it. The social and economic costs of not providing essential transportation are much higher than the investment dollars we would spend. The lost productivity alone justifies the costs.

Perhaps Kenny Evans of Washington County summed it up best when he told a transit official after the hearing, "You do your thing, which will let me do mine." It is imperative that none of us view Freedom Ride '95 as history. Instead, we must view it as a beginning of transit officials doing their thing so that all of us can do ours.
Freedom Ride ’95

Disabled hit the ground running in campaign to improve Pennsylvania transportation services

By BETTE ALBURGER

Newark Correspondent

NEWTOWN — The dire need for accessible, affordable transportation services for the mobility impaired throughout Pennsylvania is the focus of a meeting today in Harrisburg between people with disabilities, state legislators and the Secretary of Transportation Brad Mallory.

As part of Freedom Ride ’95, about 14 individuals from the Freedom Valley Disability Center (FVDC) are expected to travel this morning from administrative offices on Chapel Road in Newtown Square to the state capital to join other Freedom Riders from across the state in making their voices heard.

“It’s the first time we’ve done something like this on a statewide level,” said Ann Cope, executive director of FVDC.

The non-profit, consumer controlled and operated center for independent living serves the disabled in Delaware, Chester, Bucks and Montgomery counties. Fifty-one percent of its staff is comprised of people with disabilities.

Cope, who’s taking part in Freedom Ride ’95, said the Pennsylvania Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, along with FVDC and 12 other centers for independent living, discovered through its joint Grassroots Advocacy Project just how critical this need for accessible, affordable transportation services in Pennsylvania really is. Although especially acute in rural parts of the state, the need exists everywhere.

“No matter what the issue concerning the disabled — jobs, housing, education, independent living — it all comes down to transportation,” said Cope. “Without transportation, many Pennsylvanians with disabilities are trapped in their homes.”

The Freedom Riders want to change that by getting funding to expand existing service areas and make paratransit affordable for all, including those ineligible for reduced fares.

Cope said that in Delaware County, eight to 10 percent of the population is mobility impaired. She credits SEPTA for improving service to the disabled, such as installing lifts in buses. But she said the service still needs some fine-tuning.

She pointed out that in early 1996, door-to-door paratransit service coordinated by SEPTA will begin in Delaware County when six bus routes currently are operating. However, the service will not extend to the rural southwestern tip of the county.

She said it’s also not accessible to all disabled individuals in terms of cost. Currently, disabled senior citizens get a 15 percent discount on paratransit fares, which in the county run between $9 and $20 one way. The cue is prohibitive for those ineligible for reduced rate travel, she said.

“We hope to get the cue down to $2.50 or $3 for everyone, depending on the length of the ride,” she added.

William T. Reit, civil rights specialist at FVDC and coordinator of the Grassroots Advocacy Project, said everyone benefits from transportation services and other programs that put people with disabilities into the community and into the economy.

He and Cope are optimistic about the outcome of today’s meeting, which will be preceded by a march of Freedom Riders. It begins at noon from the Harrisburg Hilton and proceeds down to the Capitol Building, where public hearings will begin at 5 p.m.

“From what we’ve heard, the Department of Transportation is sensitive to this issue,” said Reit.

Added Cope, “People with disabilities are starting to get recognized as part of the voting public.”
LIFT to participate in 'Freedom Ride' 

By SUZANNE ENGLISH 
Era Staff Writer 

FT. MARYS — Freedom is exactly what people with disabilities will be looking for when they take part in 'Freedom Ride '95.' 

Freedom to go to work, school, the doctor's office, post office, restaurants, theaters and more. 

Freedom Ride '95 is an effort to make legislators take heed of the difficulties people with disabilities face, particularly in rural areas, in getting transportation to the basic events of life. 

Bob Mecca, staff member of St. Marys-based Life and Independence for Today, said that 20 representatives from Bradford, St. Marys and the rest of the six-county area LIFT serves will take part in the ride Sept. 19-20. 

Hundreds from Pennsylvania's 13 Centers for Independent Living, of which LIFT is one of the most rural, are expected to take part in the event, which will end in testimony before the Transportation Committee from 2 to 5 p.m. Sept. 20 in Room 6-E of the Capitol. 

"What we hope to achieve is to make legislators and the general public aware that public transportation is needed more, especially for people with disabilities, in rural Pennsylvania," Mecca said. 

Actually, the area served by LIFT is unique because the Area Transportation Authority has worked so closely with the organization that its fleet is nearly 100 percent accessible, Mecca said. 

(See RIDE, Page 10)
Rural people with disabilities fight for improved transportation

By Michael Sietz

Simple things, like visiting the grave of a loved one, when you have a disability and you live in a rural area, is no longer a simple thing, said Irene Toth, who sits in her wheelchair, talking to state transportation officials about the challenges her friends face.

"Transportation is the foundation of all the other solutions people with disabilities need to live a full life," she said.

200 people who yesterday participated in "Freedom Ride," a statewide effort to show how critical the need is for more and better transportation for those with disabilities who live in rural areas.

She works for the Center for Independent Living based in Pittsburh and serves some of the state's most rural counties, such as Clarion, Jefferson and Cameron.

Unlike urban areas, rural locales have no mass transportation available and only some state or county-sponsored services.

The problem is especially critical in Pennsylvania because it has the nation's largest rural populations. Many of those with disabilities have long ties to these areas, growing up and having families nearby, so they don't want to leave.

One by one, those who use wheelchairs, the blind and others with disabilities made short, quick speeches telling of their private wars to go to school, to work, to the grocery store.

The state not providing adequate transportation is "sort of like keeping me under house arrest 24 hours a day," one woman said.

It is "discrimination against people because they live in a certain geographic location," said another.

Those attending said they didn't know what could be done. They just wanted something done. Because an accident or a crippling disease can strike anyone.

"I'm here to help get the message across," he said. "How can you live if you can't get around?"
Freedom Ride '95 heads to Harrisburg

People will lobby for transportation funds

By Kathleen Roberts

For David J. Rees, public transportation means independence.
Wheelchair-bound, the Pottsville man relies on Schuylkill Transportation System (STS) vans to take him to the doctor or on shopping trips three or four times a month.

"It's a way of freedom for yourself," Rees says, explaining he does not wish to have to rely on friends to take him whenever he wants to go.

But Rees sees that freedom, which he describes as a civil right, slipping away due to cuts in federal funding for rural public transportation.

And about 10 other Schuylkill County people will be standing up for those rights today in Harrisburg to help maintain its current transportation services.

"Reed and others from the Arcanum Region Center for Independent Living, by the Pennsylvania Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities,...

An STS bus, "Freedom Ride 95," was set to leave the Schuylkill County Courthouse at 9 a.m. today, followed by a van from Hazleton.

The tanker was to proceed to Reading to pick up more people and then head to the Harrisburg Hilton for a press conference at 11:30 a.m.

After the press conference, the Harrisburg police were to block off one lane of Second Street and escort Freedom Riders, who are coming from all parts of the state, to a 2 p.m. public hearing on rural transportation at the Capitol Building.

The Pennsylvania Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities expected at least 150 people to:

About 300 people were expected to participate in the hearing with state legislators and representatives from the state Department of Transportation (PennDOT) in Room 608.

On Tuesday, local Freedom Riders held a press conference with the Schuylkill County Commissioners and John F. Sininsky, executive director of STS, at Schuylkill County Courthouse to talk about today's rally.

"The lack of federal transportation appropriations will put us at risk for financial support for rural transportation," Sininsky said.

The state-funded program for Schuylkill County, that will cost about $44,000 per year, he said.

''Without the state's financial help the county may have to cut service and increase fares,' he said.

For the disabled, it will mean a loss of flexibility and, in turn, a loss of independence, said John T. "Trent" Good, director of facilities for the Arcanum Region Center for Independent Living.

''It's not just money that we need, it's more money, we have to increase bus systems, not decrease them," said Trent. "We're here to support local transportation." he said.

Christine Reddy, Pottsville, a board member of the Independent Living Center, added that public transportation is crucial for the disabled to get medical care. With no way to get to their doctors, their medical care will suffer, she said.

Although Schuylkill County Commissioners Paul Shears, Franklin L. Shollenberger and Maryann D. Conway cannot attend today's rally, they expressed their continued support for rural public transportation sys-
I feel it is very important for handicapped people like myself to have reliable transportation to get to Church, for groceries, to work, and to the doctor's. I hate to have to rely on my parents or friends to take me.

I feel having a transportation system will not only benefit the disabled, but the able-bodied as well. I would love to have nice, too.

Sincerely,

Joe Smith
STATEWIDE SUMMIT MEETING
ON RURAL TRANSPORTATION
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

May 23 -24, 1996
Harrisburg Hilton & Towers

Sponsored by
The Transportation Advocacy Project
and
Advocacy Project for Accessible Rural Transportation

With Major Funding from the
Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Planning Council

In Cooperation with:
The ARC of PA
Freedom Valley Disability Center
Pennsylvania Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities
Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Pennsylvania State Independent Living Council
United Cerebral Palsy of Pennsylvania
UCP of Philadelphia and Vicinity

PURPOSE OF THE SUMMIT

To bring together consumers, advocates, transportation providers and policy makers to:
☐ Share information
☐ Develop possible solutions
☐ Plan action strategies
☐ Organize a statewide transportation alliance
to improve transportation for people with disabilities in rural and small town areas of Pennsylvania.
IT'S HAPPENING!! AND YOU ARE NEEDED!!

THE PA TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE IS LAUNCHED!

JOIN NOW AND BE A FOUNDING MEMBER!!

PURPOSE OF THE ALLIANCE

The purpose of the PA Transportation Alliance is to increase and improve the availability of accessible, affordable transportation for all PA citizens with disabilities and to be a unified, powerful statewide voice on transportation among all Pennsylvanians with disabilities and others who are committed to the Alliance mission.

HOW & WHY THE ALLIANCE WAS FORMED

In May, 1996 more than 130 people with disabilities and their allies from across the state met in Harrisburg at the statewide Summit Meeting on Rural Transportation. Participants decided unanimously to form the PA Transportation Alliance to be a strong, unified voice for all Pennsylvanians with disabilities working to gain increased, accessible, more affordable and better transportation.

WHAT THE ALLIANCE WILL WORK TO DO

The Alliance has already begun to work on the transportation issues identified at the Statewide Summit Meeting.

- Initiate a state funded subsidy to make Shared Ride fares more affordable for people with disabilities in undeserved, often rural, areas.
- Assist and support advocacy groups working on local ADA compliance in transportation.
- Work to maintain levels of public transportation funding - federal, state & local.
- Increase coordination of public and human service transportation services & resources.
- Improve conditions that could encourage the creation of volunteer driver programs - especially insurance/liability issues.
- Assist local groups working for expanded transit services (hours/days/routes, etc.).
- Assist local groups in educating more people about existing local transportation and how to use it.
- Increase the accessibility of over-the-road bus service (inter-city), train and air travel.

c/o The Transportation Advocacy Project 5502 Kamin Street Pittsburgh, PA 15217
(412) 421-3462 - Voice & Fax (412) 421-8591 - Voice
... AND YOU ARE NEEDED TO GET THESE THINGS DONE!!

The Alliance is basically people – people joining together across the state to make positive changes in transportation. Membership is open to anyone who supports the mission of the PA Transportation Alliance. Both individuals and organizations can be Alliance members. Everyone who joins the Alliance is encouraged to actively work to achieve its mission and goals.

An interim Transportation Alliance Steering Committee began meeting this past September. The Committee set a goal to have at least 250 Alliance members by early 1997. A second goal is for more than 500 Alliance members by next fall! So, join now and become an individual Founding Member. Then ask an organization to which you belong to become a Founding Member also. There is strength in numbers and together we do, can and will make a difference.

It is easy to become an Alliance Member. Simply complete and mail the enclosed form. The are no membership dues – just your commitment to do whatever you can to improve transportation for people with disabilities. Alliance members receive regular mailings about what’s happening and how to plug in.

ALLIANCE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Alliance’s interim Steering Committee members are listed below. The interim Steering Committee will serve until September 1997.

Linda Anthony, Exec. Dir., PA Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities
Steve Bennett, Advocacy Project for Accessible Rural Transportation
Steve Bond, York County Transportation Authority
Susan Bleicher, UCP of Lancaster
Margaret Dougherty, Greene Light Coalition
Gary Gerber, Co-Chair, Community Support Program
Randy Gosske, Pres., ARC Executives Council
John Lorenzo, TRIPIL-Center for Independent Living
Kathy McGregor, The Transportation Advocacy Project
Bobbie Mecca, LIFT-Center for Independent Living
Glen Niman, President, PA Coalition of Citizens With Disabilities
Paul O’Hanlon, PA Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
Wanda Osborne, Civil Rights Specialist, PA Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities
Nino Peace, PA Council of the Blind
Evelyn Price, PA Council on Independent Living
Bob Schmidt, The Transportation Advocacy Project
Giff Sellers, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Sue Tachau, Pres., UCP of PA
Lucy Spruill, PA Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
Bill West, Exec. Dir., The ARC of PA
Keith Williams, Chair, SLC Transportation Committee
Alternates:
Daniel Emmer, Community Support Program
John Hart, Pres., PA Council of the Blind
Don Stack, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

* BECOME A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE PA TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE *
* COMPLETE AND RETURN THE ENCLOSED MEMBERSHIP FORM *
WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SUMMIT?

- One hundred nine (109) people attended the Summit Meeting as participants. Participants indicated affiliations with more than 25 consumer, advocacy and services organizations across the state. Participants included consumers, advocates, public transportation providers and policy makers.

- Transit providers, providing the public transportation services in 24 rural counties, attended as participants and/or speakers.

- Thirty-three (33) speakers served on panels and in workshops. Speakers included the leadership of statewide consumer and advocacy organizations: leaders of local transportation advocacy groups; legislative representatives from the PA Senate and House Transportation Committees; representatives from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Transportation, PA Association of Municipal Transportation Authorities, PA Association for Community Transit; Committee for Accessible Transportation, Port Authority Transit; Mid-Atlantic University Transportation Center, Pennsylvania Transportation Institute, Penn State; and Local Transit Providers.

ACTION OUTCOMES OF THE SUMMIT

Summit participants determined to undertake three major action steps.

1. Establish a Statewide Transportation Alliance.

2. Take local and statewide action to make Shared Ride affordable.

3. Initiate local action to move toward better coordination of existing transportation resources.

★ ACTION STEP #1

Form a Statewide Transportation Alliance to increase accessible, affordable transportation for all people with disabilities throughout all of Pennsylvania.

The Alliance’s purpose is to create a unified, powerful statewide voice among Pennsylvanians with disabilities and others who are committed to making positive change in the availability of accessible, affordable transportation for people with disabilities.
Alliance Membership
- Statewide and local organizations and groups will be the formal members of the Alliance.
- Individuals are urged to join forces locally through new or existing groups (CIL's, Transition Councils, etc.) or to join existing state organizations and be very active in the Alliance.
- Public transportation providers and others committed to the Alliance’s purposes are invited to be actively involved in the Alliance.

Leaders of the following organizations, present at the Summit, said their organizations will likely immediately become part of the Alliance: Pennsylvania Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities; PA State Independent Living Council; Speaking for Ourselves; UCP of PA; PA Council for the Blind; PA Council for Independent Living; Northeast PA Center for Independent Living, among others.

Interim Steering Committee
- An Interim Steering Committee will be immediately formed to establish operations of the Alliance: (1) full action plan (2) statewide communications - letters, newsletter, Web Site, etc. (3) legislative networks (4) finances, and other matters. The plan is for the Steering Committee to meet in July.

Immediate State Level Priority
- To increase accessible, affordable transportation for people with disabilities in areas - typically rural - where there is no fixed route and related ADA mandated paratransit.

ACTION STEP #2
Take statewide and local action to make Shared Ride affordable.

Immediate Action:
Statewide Grassroots Campaign for Legislative Action to Reduce Shared Ride Fares for People with Disabilities in Rural Areas

1. Introduce legislation
2. Circulate a petition statewide supporting this legislation
3. Visits, letters and calls to PA Senators & Representatives
4. Other steps to be determined

The strong, unified voice of the Transportation Alliance will be pivotal in this campaign for legislative action.

Additional, Important Shared Ride Related Action Steps Identified at the Summit

- Register to vote and then vote
- Get to know and have a relationship with local state legislators - talk to them regularly
- Be clear with legislators that more money is needed for transportation.
- Talk regularly with your county officials about transportation needs.

**************

- Do a community survey to see what the unmet transportation needs are among all people. Discuss these with your Shared Ride provider to see if ridership can be increased and bring about reduced fare costs.
- Work with the Shared Ride provider to make the system more consumer oriented.
- Work with your Shared Ride provider to do active outreach and a better job of making information available to attract more riders.
- Talk with your Shared Ride provider about
things that can already be done such as setting up designated stops where riders can pay a lower fare.

- Talk with the local Shared Ride provider about how zone fares are determined.
- Work to get clearer or more standardized local arrangements among different transportation subsidy programs.

**************

- Look for local partners (people with and without disabilities, Mem. Auto Assoc., etc.) for working on local transit changes.
- Transportation Projects (T.A.P. & A.P.A.R.T.) or the Transportation Alliance will publish a list of pending state legislation affecting transportation and provide regular updates on status.
- Link discussion of transportation with "hot" legislative themes/topics such as welfare reform, work and training programs, minimum wage issues, etc.

**************

- Discuss what the barriers are to increased use of existing transportation vehicles in your area and how vans are gotten.
- Consider setting consumer operated paratransit services or volunteer driver programs to increase the amount and hours of available transportation.

**************

Transportation coordination is commonly attempted when two or more community organizations are providing transportation for certain people. Often there is some duplication of services and vehicles may be under used while needs go unmet. There are different levels of coordination. Simple coordination might be several agencies cooperating on providing driver sensitivity training. Mid-level coordination might involve the sharing of vehicles and facilities. More complete coordination might involve the complete consolidation of transit services under one agency.

Local Action Steps Identified at the Summit to Move Toward Coordination

- Identify your local county coordinating organization (i.e., county transportation office/program, public transit authority.) Each county has an official coordinating agency.
- Work to see if the officially designated coordination agency has the interest, will and expertise to further active coordination among all groups that provide transportation.

**************

- Get all providers - public transit and human services who provide any kind of transportation services together to discuss sharing, linking, and coordinating their transportation resources.
- Identify possible current duplication of services among all providers of transportation.
- Link-up or pair counties experienced in coordination with those who want to or are beginning to do this (PACT can help in setting up this kind of partnering).

**************

- Look at local census data to see if the elderly, especially "frail elderly" (who often have disabilities) are a good potential group to partner with.
- Create a true sense of flexibility, cooperation and fairness - a sense of shared ownership among all those organizations/agencies who want to coordinate their transportation resources.

**************

- Work to coordinate local fixed route and shared ride services so people can transfer from fixed route to shared ride and visa-versa to get to places they can't now reach on one or the other systems.
**SUMMIT WORKSHOPS**

Workshops provided Summit participants with concrete action steps in four additional key areas important to increasing the accessibility and availability of transportation.

- **Innovative Transportation Operations**
  
  Four transit providers discussed specific innovative services they have implemented.

- **ADA Transportation Compliance and Monitoring**
  
  Two transportation advocates and a transit provider discussed ADA regulations and requirements, steps for implementation and ways to effectively monitor compliance.

- **Volunteer Driver Programs**
  
  Two county-wide volunteer driver program sponsors discussed how they have developed and operate their programs.

- **How to Build and Maintain a Great Transportation Advocacy Group**
  
  Three leaders of local area transportation advocacy groups presented valuable, nuts and bolts information about how the groups were formed and function, issues the groups work on and suggestions for others starting or maintaining a group.

---

**WHAT'S NEXT??**

**LOOK FOR . . .**

- News from the Transportation Alliance following the first Steering Committee Meeting in late July.

**SHARE . . .**

Information and ideas from the Summit with as many people as possible in your area.

**CONTACT . . .**

Your local state legislators to discuss the Summit Meeting outcomes -- particularly action needed to make Shared Ride affordable for people with disabilities in rural PA.

**ORGANIZE . . .**

A mini Transportation Summit in your local area.

**GET ACTIVE . . .**

With a local group advocating for affordable, accessible transportation in your area (if you aren’t already).

**CALL . . .**

For information and assistance with transportation advocacy work in your area:

- **The Transportation Advocacy Project**
  Bob Schmitt or Kathy McGregor
  (412) 421-5462 or 421-8551

- **Advocacy Project for Accessible Rural Transportation**
  Steve Bennett or Glen Niman
  1-800-357-222
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL
No. 1236 Session of 1998

INTRODUCED BY RHoades, Stout, Salvatore, Tomlinson, Costa, Bodack, O'Pake, Afflerbach, Delph, Stapleton, White, Williams, Brightbill, Mellow, Kasunic, Corman, Schwartz, Tartaglione, Nowery, Punt, Belan, Kukovich, Lavalle, Sarll, Musto, Greenleaf, Lemmond, Wagner and Murphy, January 14, 1998

REFERRED TO TRANSPORTATION, JANUARY 14, 1998

AN ACT

1 Empowering and authorizing the Department of Transportation to establish and administer a grant program for the establishment of a three-year pilot program to provide shared-ride public transportation service for persons with certain disabilities throughout this Commonwealth; and making an appropriation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Section 1. Short title.
2 Section 2. Legislative intent.
3 Section 3. Definitions.
4 Section 4. Persons with Disabilities Shared-Ride Pilot Program.
5 Section 5. Grant distribution.
6 Section 6. Program review.
7 Section 7. Appropriation.
8 Section 8. Expiration.
9 Section 9. Effective date.
10 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18
1 Section 1. Short title.
2 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Persons with
3 Disabilities Shared-Ride Pilot Program Act.
4 Section 2. Legislative intent.
5 It is the intent of the General Assembly and the purpose of
6 this act to increase public transportation opportunities for
7 Pennsylvania citizens who are under 64 years of age and who have
8 certain disabilities. Grants made by this program are intended
9 to supplement and are not intended to replace existing
10 transportation funds or existing transportation services for
11 people with disabilities.
12 Section 3. Definitions.
13 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
14 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
15 context clearly indicates otherwise:
16 "Average fare." Total passenger revenue divided by the total
17 linked passenger trips, excluding trips by senior citizens
18 participating in the shared-ride program for senior citizens,
19 for purposes of calculating the reasonable per mile limits or
20 trip fare limits under this act.
21 "Counties." Any county.
22 "County transportation system." Buses, vans or other transit
23 vehicles purchased, maintained and operated by any county or its
24 agents and used to provide free or reduced rate transportation
25 within the county to eligible persons.
26 "Department." The Department of Transportation of the
27 Commonwealth.
28 "Fixed route public transportation services." Regularly
29 scheduled transportation that is available to the general public
30 and is provided according to published schedules along
designated published routes with specified stopping points for
the taking on and discharging of passengers. Eligible services
include public bus and commuter rail systems. The term does not
include exclusive ride taxi service, charter or sightseeing
services, nonpublic transportation or school bus or limousine
services.

"Funds." The General Fund of the Commonwealth.

"Linked passenger trips." Transit trips taken by initially
boarding patrons paying a full fare, a reduced fare or no fare.
The term does not include transfer rides or charter rides.

"Local transportation organization." Any political
subdivision or any mass transportation authority empowered to
render, contract for the rendering or assist in the rendering of
transportation service in a limited area in this Commonwealth.

"Municipalities." A city, borough, township, incorporated
town or town.

"Person with certain disabilities." With respect to an
individual, an individual with a physical or mental impairment
that substantially limits the person from transporting himself
or engaging in regularly provided public transportation systems.

Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement
or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body
systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sensory and
respiratory; any mental or psychological disorder, such as
mental retardation, organic brain syndrome or emotional or
mental illness; and includes, but is not limited to, such
contagious or noncontiguous diseases and conditions as
orthopedic and visual conditions, cerebral palsy, epilepsy,
muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease,
diabetes, mental retardation and HIV.
"Program." Shared-ride public transportation services for persons with certain disabilities under the Persons with Disabilities Shared-Ride Pilot Program established in section 4.

"Project grant." The Commonwealth's share of the cost of carrying out the particular project, which cost may include costs incurred prior to the effective date of this act and which cost shall include an appropriate allowance for the administrative expenses involved in carrying out the project.

"Provider." Any entity eligible to apply for grant funds under section 4(c) which applies for and is approved for grant funds under this act.

"Secretary." The Secretary of Transportation of the Commonwealth.

"Shared-ride public transportation services." Demand-responsive transportation that is available to the general public, operates on a nonfixed route basis and charges a fare to all riders. For transportation to be included in this term, the first fare-paying passengers to enter the public transportation vehicle must not refuse to share the vehicle with other passengers during a given trip. The term does not include exclusive ride taxi service, charter and sightseeing services, nonpublic transportation, school buses and limousine services.

"Transit vehicle." A self-propelled or electrically propelled vehicle designed for carrying four or more passengers, exclusive of the driver, other than a taxicab, designed and used for the transportation of persons for compensation.

"Transportation company." Any person, firm or corporation rendering public passenger service pursuant to common carrier authorization from the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission or the Interstate Commerce Commission.
"Type of shared-ride services provided." The purpose of the shared-ride trip.

"Urban common carrier mass transportation." Transportation within an area that includes a municipality or other built-up place which is appropriate, in the judgment of the department, for a common carrier transportation system to serve commuters or others in the locality, taking into consideration the local patterns and trends of urban growth, by bus or rail or other conveyance, either publicly or privately owned, serving the general public. The term does not include school buses or charter or sightseeing services.

Section 4. Persons with Disabilities Shared-Ride Pilot Program.

(a) Power and duty of department.--The department has the power and duty to administer, utilizing a fixed amount of funds as appropriated by the General Assembly, a three-year pilot program authorizing grants to eligible applicants that provide shared-ride public transportation services for persons with certain disabilities.

(b) Limitation on grant amounts.--Grants authorized to any provider under this act shall be limited to an amount equal to 85% of the reasonable per mile or trip fare limits as determined by the department, in consultation with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission. Individuals utilizing shared-ride public transportation services for persons with certain disabilities shall contribute 15% of the individual fare.

(c) Request for proposal.--The department shall organize the pilot program on a request and proposal basis. Minimum criteria for the department to accept a proposal shall be as provided in section 5. The department has the authority to further define the criteria for applying for and the distribution of grants.
(d) Eligible applicants.--All providers of the shared-ride program for the elderly, as provided under 74 Pa.C.S. § 1302 (relating to program authorizations) and section 904 of the act of August 26, 1971 (P.L.351, No.91), known as the State Lottery Law, are eligible to apply for grant funds under this act. In addition, the following entities are eligible to apply to the department for grant funds under this act:

(1) Counties.
(2) County transportation systems.
(3) Local transportation organizations.
(4) Municipalities.
(5) Transportation companies.
(6) Urban common carrier mass transportation providers.

(e) Coordinated transportation plans.--The department shall require that each provider of shared-ride transportation services for persons with certain disabilities incorporate those services into its annually developed coordinated transportation plan.

(f) Entitlement not created.--Nothing in this act creates or provides any individual with an entitlement to services. It is the intent of the General Assembly that services under this act shall be made available only to the extent of availability and level of appropriations made by the General Assembly.

(g) Commencement and conclusion of pilot program.--The three-year pilot program shall include three years in which providers operate pilot programs. The three-year period in which the pilot program will be operational shall commence on the date that the first grant is disbursed by the department to a provider and shall conclude three years from that date.

(h) Regulations.--The department shall promulgate
regulations necessary to:

(1) Carry out the distribution of grants for the limited
reimbursement for shared-ride public transportation services
to persons with certain disabilities.

(2) Ensure that applicants from the urban, suburban and
rural areas of this Commonwealth are considered for grant
funds.

Section 5. Grant distribution.

(a) Minimum criteria for selection of providers.--The
department shall deny any application for grant funds submitted
by any potential provider unless the applicant has met the
following minimum criteria:

(1) The applicant shall have the ability to provide
shared-ride, point-to-point services for persons with certain
disabilities.

(2) The applicant shall have the ability to limit access
to the program to persons with certain disabilities.

(3) The applicant shall have the ability to use grant
funds to subsidize the pilot program such that eligible
riders pay a fare no more than 15% of the full-fare cost.

(4) The applicant shall have the ability to implement an
eligibility verification process which will ensure that only
persons with certain disabilities have access to the program.

(5) The applicant shall have the ability to compile
information, as specified in section 6, such that the
department can make a monthly status report.

(6) The applicant shall have the ability to include
meaningful public participation from persons with
disabilities in the planning and implementation of the
program.

1998081236B1569 - 7 -
(7) The applicant shall have the ability to serve a
significant portion of a county. The department shall give
preference to providers that have such ability but shall not
exclude from consideration providers that do not have such
ability.

(b) Timetable.--All grants to providers shall be distributed
within one year of the effective date of this act.

(c) Agreement.--The department shall review the proposal
and, if satisfied that the proposal is in accordance with the
purposes of this act, shall enter into an agreement subject to
the condition that the grant be used in accordance with the
terms of the proposal. The time and payment of the grant and any
conditions concerning such payment shall be set forth in the
grant agreement.

Section 6. Program review.

(a) Performance audit.--The Legislative Budget and Finance
Committee shall conduct a performance audit at the conclusion of
the program's second year to assess whether the program is
enhancing the mobility of persons with disabilities and conduct
a cost-benefit analysis of the program's continuation or
expansion. The findings of the performance audit, including
specific recommendations on the continuation of the program,
shall be presented to the General Assembly no later than six
months from the completion of the program's third year as
specified in section 4(g).

(b) Report.--The department shall compile and report on a
quarterly basis program performance measures, which at a minimum
shall include total number of riders, total number of rides
provided per month, number of providers, percentage of
population served, geographical coverage of shared-ride usage,
customer satisfaction, total monthly expenditures, total cost
per ride, required subsidy per passenger and per mile and
breakdown of the type of shared-ride services being provided. A
copy of the department's quarterly report shall be provided to
the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee.

Section 7. Appropriation.
The General Assembly hereby appropriates the sum of
$15,000,000, or as much thereof as shall be necessary, to the
Department of Transportation, to carry out the provisions of
this act.

Section 8. Expiration.
The Persons with Disabilities Shared-Ride Pilot Program shall
terminate four years from the effective date of this act.

Section 9. Effective date.
This act shall take effect in 60 days.
THE DISABILITY BUDGET COALITION PRESENTS

A

DISABILITY AGENDA

FOR THE
BUDGET OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF
PENNSYLVANIA

2003-2004

May, 2003
### Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SECTION 1:</strong></td>
<td><strong>STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SECTION 2:</strong></td>
<td><strong>SELECTED AREAS OF CONCERN</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Public Welfare</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attendant Care</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OSP Community Resource Centers (CRC’s)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independence, Obra, Commcare Waivers; Autism Pilot</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gaps Initiative</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Intervention</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Support</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive Services</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expedited Services Fund</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prescription Drugs for Non-Seniors with Disabilities</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Labor and Industry</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assistive Technology Lending Library</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Centers for Independent Living</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office of Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bureau of Blindness &amp; Visual Services</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statewide Independent Living Council</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Disability Budget Coalition is to work together to achieve coordinated services and supports that meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and their family members. These services and supports should reflect the importance of consumer control and empowerment. Programs should be available to all people with disabilities regardless of their age, onset of their disability, the specific disability, or where they live. Recognizing the importance of unity among diverse groups, the Coalition has advanced its mission each year, since its formation in 1989, with the publication of a Disability Agenda for the Commonwealth's upcoming fiscal year. The more than seventy groups from across Pennsylvania representing people with physical and sensory disabilities that comprise the Coalition are pleased to present their 2003-04 Disability Agenda.

This Agenda, our fifteenth, continues to include a variety of existing and new programs serving people with physical and sensory disabilities. We've tried to recommend new programs and suggest ways that existing programs can begin to move us closer to our vision. That vision is of a system which meets all the needs, and a inclusive rather than exclusive, that eliminates gaps rather than erecting new barriers. It is a vision of a system that recognizes that needs differ, but that differing needs can be met efficiently, without unnecessary waste or duplication.

During the Ridge/Schweiker Administration, several important new programs were begun and some key community services saw significant increases. While the ratio is changing, funds for these community programs still represent only a small portion of the Commonwealth's service investment. Institutions, serving a smaller number of individuals, continue to consume the vast majority of resources. It is encouraging that our achievements represent a small step towards remediating this injustice. But for those individuals who continue to be forced into nursing homes because the services they need are not available in the community, the steps forward are far too small and far too slow. For those individuals, and the Commonwealth as a whole, it is imperative that we expedite the move from institutional care to community based services.

The U.S. Supreme Court decision in the Olmstead case declared that states must serve people in the most integrated setting and discussed the need for comprehensive planning. The Commonwealth had engaged in planning for movement from institutional to community services for some disabilities even before the decision was handed down. Those planning efforts have been expanded to be cross-disability, including the needs of people with physical and sensory disabilities. We are pleased to support and participate in these efforts.

While the Agenda does not specifically address the needs of people with mental retardation, mental illness, AIDS and other disabling diseases and conditions, we recognize these needs and support their requests for financial support. The 2003-04 Agenda, like its predecessors, is not comprehensive. Many programs for people with sensory and physical disabilities are not included. We also do not address generic services used by people with disabilities and many others, such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Drug and Alcohol treatment, Legal Services and Domestic Violence. All of these programs need additional funding and more attention to accessibility.

The price tag on this agenda is high. But the costs of focusing resources on institutionalization while failing to provide the needed community supports and services is even higher. Independence does not come cheaply but the costs of dependence, both human and economic, are far higher. In the long run and the short run, investments in programs and services that enable people with disabilities to lead independent and productive lives make sense for Pennsylvania.
Persons with disabilities around the state have worked with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to implement and utilize the "Persons with Disabilities Shared Ride Pilot Program" in eight counties of PA. The program is the result of a statewide advocacy effort over many years by persons with disabilities who want affordable, accessible transportation. In the 2002-2003 state budget, Governor Schweiker and the PA General Assembly included a 3 million dollar appropriation to maintain the eight initial counties and to expand the program. The PA Department of Transportation has selected 16 additional counties where this affordable transportation program will begin to be implemented in the 2002-2003 budget year.

The "Persons with Disabilities Shared Ride Program" has enabled people with disabilities who live in areas unserved or underserved by existing public transportation to access their communities. Lack of affordable transportation commonly means that many Pennsylvanians with disabilities are unable to actively participate in community activities such as voting, pursuing an education, getting to jobs or volunteer positions, going to church or visiting with family and friends and attending a movie.

Eligible riders with disabilities use shared ride transportation and pay only $0.90 to $4.50 for one-way trips that before the program cost them from $6.00 to $30.00. Once the program is implemented statewide, approximately 102,500 Pennsylvanians with disabilities under 65 years old will, for the first time, gain access to affordable shared-ride transportation options. Riders pay a fare equal to only 15% the cost of services.

The "Persons with Disabilities Shared Ride Program" is a success. Statistics gathered during the pilot phase of the program show that over 50% of the trips were being used for work purposes. A commitment is now needed to expand the program throughout the state.

This subsidy means freedom for many people with disabilities, especially in rural areas of the state, who cannot afford the high cost of transportation. The increased productivity and other positive benefits easily justifies this small investment for shared ride services for people with disabilities.

WE RECOMMEND:
- That the Department budget at least $10,000,000 to continue providing a subsidy for shared ride services for people with disabilities in the 24 current program counties, and to expand the program statewide; and
- That the Department of Transportation assume more responsibility for coordinating programs, providing educational and technical assistance to local transit authorities on the needs and rights of people with disabilities, and aggressively enforcing civil rights law related to transit systems.

For more information, contact Ginny Rogers, PA Transportation Alliance at 717-731-1900 or grogers@ciclp.org.

DEPARTMENT OF AGING

ATTENDANT CARE

When people who use Attendant Care turn 60 years of age, they are no longer eligible for the Department of Public Welfare’s (DPW) Attendant Care program. They must make a transition into a program administered by the Department of Aging (PDA) through its statewide Area Agency on Aging (AAA) network. Unlike the DPW Attendant Care program, PDA’s program is not supported by legislation. The traditional PDA assessment and care planning process would provide approximately half of the service hours provided by DPW’s program, putting them at risk and forcing people into nursing homes and other institutions.
My name is Melissa Sites and I'm 24 yrs. old & a single parent of a 7 year old boy. I'm legally blind and currently am a stay at home mom because it is very hard to find employment that is painful & its very hard to get transportation to and from work.

I have a chance right now to go to college. My counselor from Blindness and Visual Services said everything would be paid for and taken care of except transportation to get there. It seems no matter how I try to get around anything there's always a catch, no transportation.

It's not only for work either, its also for just simple things, lots of people take for granted like going to the store, bank, emergency trip to the doctor.

We desperately need transportation especially in rural areas that is affordable and dependable.

Melissa Sites
WHEREAS, Washington County has supported expanded services for the disabled population of Washington County; and

WHEREAS, the disabled population of Washington County is in need of expanded transportation services to job interviews, shopping, entertainment, and public services; and

WHEREAS, legislation has been introduced - Senate Bill #1236 "The Person With Disabilities Shared Ride Pilot Program" - for persons with disabilities to utilize available transportation to job interviews, shopping, entertainment, and public services for 15% of cost of the total ride.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim their support of Senate Bill #1236 which will enable disabled individuals of Washington County to better function in a mobile society.

March 30, 1998

Senator James J. Rhoades
Senate Post Office
350 Main Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0030

Dear Senator Rhoades:

On behalf of the Schuylkill County Board of Commissioners, we wish to express our ardent support and advocacy for the future passage of S.B.1236 "The Persons with Disabilities Shared Ride Pilot Program Act" which was recently introduced under your leadership. This innovative piece of transit funding legislation, would have the potential of improving the mobility and quality of life for approximately 91,000 persons with disabilities that live in rural areas of Pennsylvania.

As you know, the current Shared Ride Lottery Program provides transportation to senior citizens over the age of 65 at a reduced fare, but unfortunately it does not serve the transportation needs of persons under age 65 that are physically or mentally challenged.

It is for this expressed purpose that the Schuylkill County Board of Commissioners applaud and support your esteemed efforts to provide affordable public transportation to the many disabled residents in our communities by virtue of this groundbreaking legislative initiative.

cc: Mr. John F. Sainsky

TOTAL P. 02
June 17, 1998

The Honorable Noah W. Wenger
Room 281, Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0030

Dear Senator Wenger:

I met with representatives of Lancaster Disabled for Change. They were interested in discussing provisions of Senate Bill No. 1236 which I have discussed with Jonathan Greer on several occasions.

I would like to add my support for provisions of Senate Bill No. 1236 in that I believe it compliments the shared ride services currently in place and provided by Red Rose Transit Authority. The additional appropriation would allow us to provide services for additional disabled individuals. I think the ability to allow more individuals to have transportation mobility in itself is an important approach. I will also tell you that we have been working with various organizations to find employment opportunities for individuals with special needs through the additional allocation of resources. I believe we will be able to get more people into jobs and be fully productive integrated citizens within the Pennsylvania community.

On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, please consider this my letter of support for Senate Bill No. 1276. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

TERRY L. KAUFFMAN, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

TLK/cc
x: Senator Gib Armstrong
Senator Richard Tilghman, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee
Linda Hengst, Citizens for Independence and Access, Inc.
Phillip Keller, Representative, Lancaster Disabled for Change
HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY
We request your support of:
the
"Persons with Disabilities Shared Ride Program Act"

We want affordable, accessible transportation for people with disabilities who live in rural communities;
the Heartland of Pennsylvania.

Thank you
April 21, 1999

Gisny Rogers, Coordinator
PA Transportation Alliance
415 Fallowfield Road, Suite 101
Camp Hill, PA 17011

Dear Ms. Rogers:

I am in receipt of your recent correspondence with my office soliciting support for legislation to be introduced by Senator James RohAES known as the Persons with Disabilities Shared Ride Act.

I would like to thank you for contacting me on this matter. I was a co-sponsor of this legislation last session and intend to do so again this session. I believe this legislation will provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to lead as normal a life as possible.

I enjoyed the opportunity to share similar viewpoints with you on this subject. If I can ever be of assistance to you, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Jay Costa, Jr.
43rd Senatorial District

JC/kv
On Monday, April 17th, the Disability Budget Coalition (DBC) will host a spring event at the Capitol Rotunda to bring attention to disability funding in the Governor's budget. The Governor did not include money in this year's budget to fund a rural transportation program that advocates requested. In cooperation with the DBC, the Alliance wants rural Pennsylvanians with disabilities who do not have affordable transportation to fill out an "Absentee Citizen Form." The form states the following message:

Due to a lack of affordable, accessible rural transportation for citizens with disabilities, 1, one of the thousands of rural Pennsylvanians with disabilities who cannot afford transportation, could not come to Harrisburg to support the April 17, 2000 Disability Budget Coalition's Rally.

Absentee Citizen

print name here

address

I will be mailing a form to every person on my mailing list, and request your support to get this form copied and sent as quickly as possible to those without affordable transportation. They need to be sent back to me, Ginny Rogers, by April 12th at the latest to be included in the spring event at the Capitol. Questions, please call me at 1-800-323-6060.
ROLLING FOR JUSTICE

Kathy along State Street focuses on needs of disabled in rural areas

By DAVID ABRAM
Staff writer

Bob Keurer knows firsthand how hard it can be to make a difference in people's lives. Keurer, who suffers from muscular dystrophy, was first diagnosed with the disease in 1990. Since then, he has had to make many adjustments to his daily life, including using a wheelchair to get around.

Keurer was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy in 1990. Since then, he has had to make many adjustments to his daily life, including using a wheelchair to get around.

The ADA has made a big impact on Keurer's life. "It's been a real help," he said. "It's been great." Keurer is a regular attendee of the annual Disability Rights March, which takes place in downtown Rochester every year. "I love it," he said. "It's a great way to show support for people with disabilities." Keurer is also a member of the Rochester chapter of the National Organization of People with Disabilities.

Rolling Justice 2008

Rolling Justice 2008 is a nationwide event that focuses on accessibility in rural areas. The event was held on Saturday, June 28, in Rochester, NY. The event was organized by the Rochester chapter of the National Organization of People with Disabilities.

More than 150 people, many in wheelchairs, marched on State Street in Rochester to demand better accessibility in rural areas. The march was part of the larger Rolling Justice 2008 campaign, which seeks to raise awareness about accessibility issues in rural areas.

See ROLLING, Page 46
Rolling through the county

Event raises awareness of disabilities

By LAURI GALENTINE

Mercer — They literally rolled through Mercer County — on a flatbed tractor trailer. Rolling Justice 2000 was intended to make a point and that it did.

On the 10th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, people with disabilities from all over Pennsylvania converged on the Mercer County courthouse lawn in celebration, but also to bring attention to the problems these people still face.

The march — which started from Erie, Pittsburgh and Scranton on July 4 — was intended to “show the difficulties faced by people with disabilities when they simply want to get from one place to another,” said Catherine Holt, co-executive director of the Mercer County Disabilities Coalition (MCDC).

Cheryl O’Connell said it is not uncommon for a person with a disability to have to wait two hours or more for a ride after contacting organizations that provide such accommodations.

“Transportation for people with disabilities is really lacking,” said Guy Rodgers of the Pennsylvania Transportation Alliance.

The local leg of the statewide journey — the group will end up in Philadelphia next week — was organized by Garner Lloyd, vice chair of the MCDC.

The county group met the marchers at the Crawford County line to escort them through Mercer County. Their route took them through Shaakleville into Mercer and from there through Stoneboro and Sandy Lake where they held another rally at the McKeesport Environmental Center.

Lloyd arranged for the tractor-trailer ride which was ultimately donated by B-Line Enterprises Inc., of Wexford.

“It was real thrill rolling down (U.S.) Route 19 on the back of a lowboy,” said Joesey Blaack of the Pennsylvania Disabilities Coalition. “I’ve never done anything like it before.”

She praised Lloyd for doing “an incredible job.”

Mercer — Part of a statewide effort to bring attention to the plight of the disabled, Rolling Justice 2000 rolled through Mercer County Friday on the back of a flatbed tractor-trailer. Marchers were mostly people with disabilities, or those who work with people with disabilities, along with five Farrell High and Middle School students who volunteered their time as helpers.

The group climbed down, or were lifted off, the truck in front of the courthouse.

After a brief rally attended by city officials from all over the county, including Greenville’s Mayor Cliff Harrier, marchers picnicked near the bandstand before taking off again.

At the rally, Mercer County Commissioner Brian W. Shipley told the group that he feels people with disabilities should enjoy “the same kind of rights as those of us who are more fortunate.”

All who attended signed a proclamation supporting legislation for better transportation for the disabled that will be given to Gov. Tom Ridge at the state’s Republican Convention.
Got Milk! Need Transportation!

Support Non-Motorized Transportation for Women with Disabilities

For more information, please visit:
www.cowtransportation.com
The Governor’s Disability Policy Team
Rural Transportation Workgroup
Invites You To An

Information Gathering
Forum Videoconference

Thursday, September 3, 1998
at the
University of Pittsburgh at Titusville
504 East Main Street
Titusville, PA 16354
beginning at 9:00 AM

This Forum is being held to solicit input on issues surrounding rural transportation and accessibility for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities and those consumer and service groups who assist them are being offered the opportunity to comment to the workgroup.

Comments will be limited to approximately ten minutes in order to give all participating their opportunity.

Each Forum will be videotaped to ensure all comments are recorded.

Participants will receive written answers to any questions within two weeks of the Forum date.

If you can not attend the Forum but would like to comment, written or other formatted material will be accepted. Please send comments to: Policy Office 555 Walnut Street, 9th Floor Forum Place Harrisburg, PA 17101-1800

Please call (814) 827-4400 for directions to the meeting.

To register and obtain more information about the Forums or if you require special needs for attendance, please call (717) 787-0787. To be reached by TTY/TTD relay service dial 1-800-654-5984 then (717) 787-0787.
Reliable, Affordable Transportation for People with Disabilities

SB 1066
Ride Bill
Shared

"Blindfolded
Take This
Days of
One of These"

Department of Transportation

Majority
Borderline

Minority
Attention
Transportation

Weekly Review
TRANSPORTATION DEFENSE FUND
PLEASE CONTRIBUTE

Disability Advocates were arrested at the Department of Transportation on October 21, 1999. Rural Pennsylvanians with disabilities without personal vehicles cannot get to work, school, stores, rehabilitation programs, voting booths, or ANYWHERE!

22 advocates who were arrested asked Secretary Mallory to listen to THEM! Instead, they were arrested and now fined $200.00 EACH! Please contribute to their Defense Fund so that they can pay the fines and continue their fight for Transportation Rights! Thank You for Your Support.

Make Checks Payable To:
TRIPPII. Defense Fund
69 East Beau Street
Washington, PA 15301

Call John Lorraine at 724-223-5115 if you have any questions or suggestions!

THE PEOPLE UNITED WILL NEVER BE DEFEATED!

Contributions of $20, $50 and $100 are most needed!

Reliable, Affordable transportation for People with Disabilities
ACTION ALERT

The PA Transportation Alliance has learned that the Department of Transportation may not support our Shared Ride Bill because the Department believes there is not enough "quantitative" data to support the proposed program. Instead, the Department has authorized a study by a consulting company which could last until September, 2000.

This action could hurt our chances of getting the Bill through the Senate Committees and our voices need to be heard. Every person who is affected by the lack of affordable, accessible transportation must write to Secretary Bradley Mallory at the Department of Transportation and tell him we want our Bill! Tell him not to let his study interfere with our legislation. Also, the Senators in the Transportation Committee, especially Senator Madigan, the chair, need to get letters with the same information. Act today! Please contact Ginny Rogers at 1-800-323-6060 if you have questions.

Secretary Bradley Mallory  
PA Department of Transportation  
9th Floor, Forum Place  
555 Walnut Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
(717) 787-5574

Senator Madigan  
Room 286  
Main Capitol  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
(717) 787-3280
MEMO

TO:        All House Members

FROM:      Representative Patrick Browne

DATE:      February 7, 2000

RE:        Proposed Legislation - Affordable Transit for Persons With Disabilities

I plan to soon introduce a bill to make shared rides affordable for persons with disabilities. The Persons with Disabilities Shared Ride Program Act would help meet a need for a segment of the population that doesn't fit the criteria to get funding from the Lottery Program.

An estimated 102,500 people with disabilities living in the Commonwealth do not have access to affordable public transportation because they live outside of areas served by fixed route buses and ADA complimentary paratransit services. Yet, every county in Pennsylvania does have a Shared Ride program -- often thought of as the “senior citizen” transportation service. Everyone, however, can use Shared Ride transportation. The problem is that it is very expensive for people with disabilities who are under 65. They must pay the full cost of every trip -- an average of $10 for a one way trip. People with disabilities cannot afford to use such a high cost service. This lack of transportation is especially acute in the rural and suburban areas of the state. Without transportation, people with disabilities are not able to participate in the everyday activities of community life that many people take for granted.

Specifically, the bill is a free-standing act that provides a $6 million General Fund appropriation for a PennDOT grant program. The grants totaling 85% of the costs would be made to local providers that can show ability to serve these citizens. The riders would contribute 15% through the farebox.

This bill provides for oversight by the Legislative Budget & Finance Committee in the form of a performance audit and an annual report to the General Assembly Transportation and Appropriations Committees.
The legislation is a companion bill to Senate Bill 1066, introduced for the second straight session by Sen. James Rhoades. Sen. Rhoades has graciously supported my request to introduce the bill in our Chamber.

If you would like to cosponsor this important legislation, please contact Bonita at 7-6572 by February 15th. Thank you.

PMB/bft
November 30, 2000

Honorable Lynn B. Herman
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
313 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Dear Mr. Herman:

This letter is in follow up to the State Transportation Advisory Committee’s Executive Summary entitled “Assessing the Availability of Transportation Services for Persons with Disabilities in Rural Pennsylvania” which is attached. The study contained a recommendation that PennDOT implement a Pilot Project in the counties of Greene, Washington, York, Cumberland, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson and Schuylkill. The Pilot Project is intended to collect user data on persons with disabilities in rural areas of Pennsylvania while offering them additional transportation services.

In September 2000, I directed the Department’s Bureau of Public Transportation to design and implement an eighteen-month data collection Pilot Project. The Pilot Project will begin in January 2001 and last through June 2002. Currently, my staff, the affected transit providers, and local advisory committees are preparing to implement the Pilot Project. The enclosed materials will provide you with an up-to-date report of our progress with the Pilot Project.

Please feel free to call Paul Grazzo of the Office of Legislative Affairs at 717-787-5144 if you have any questions regarding the Pilot Project. We look forward to offering additional transportation services to your constituents with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Bradley L. Mallory
Secretary of Transportation

Enclosures
Status Report On Launching A Pilot Project On Rural Transportation Services For Persons With Disabilities

Introduction

Beginning in January 2001, PennDOT will provide reduced fare public transportation services to persons with disabilities in eight counties possessing rural attributes. The pilot project counties are Clearfield, Cumberland, Elk, Greene, Jefferson, Schuylkill, Washington and York.

The Pilot Project was initiated in response to the Governor’s Office request to more thoroughly examine this issue and later became the focus of a State Transportation Advisory Committee study.

Goals of the Pilot Project

The three most important goals of the Pilot Project in priority order are:

- To collect data on passengers with disabilities who use reduced fare transportation services and their public transportation needs.
- To ensure that the Pilot Project is perceived and used as a supplemental service for persons with disabilities. It is imperative that no existing human services funds be redirected away from maintaining existing transportation services. Otherwise, the Pilot Project will have a minimal impact on this population and distort the total cost of providing this supplemental transportation service.
- To test the feasibility of using the public Shared-Ride services model, now used for seniors and the general public, as the base line service, and to also test other transportation models.

Design of the Pilot Project

To begin, the six transit providers with input from their local advisory committees will offer a Shared-Ride like program for persons with disabilities. This base line service includes:

- 85% discount on shared-ride service
- Advance reservations
- Reimbursement limits

While PennDOT is beginning the Pilot Project by using the currently available Shared-Ride transportation services, the transit providers will be exploring opportunities to
expand those services for all passengers if demand warrants. Examples of other transportation models that may be considered include employer sponsored transportation or partnerships with volunteers and faith based organizations.

We have designed the Pilot Project to have the transit providers collect information on trips even if they cannot be immediately deliver the service. It will be important for persons with disabilities to register with their transit providers and make their transportation service needs known at that time.

Funding the Pilot Project

The Pilot Project is being funded with State General Funds through PennDOT. No lottery funds are being used to support the Pilot Project.

Intake Process

The transit providers shown at Attachment A will conduct a standard registration process for all interested applicants. This intake process will include gathering income data, confirming that the applicant is a person with a physical and/or mental impairment that substantially limits him/her in one or more of the major life activities. The applicant will be asked if he/she receives transportation services from other transportation programs and will be referred to other agencies when appropriate.

Next Steps

The transit providers, along with their local advisory committees, PennDOT and the disability community will begin outreach and educational activities to potential customers. Grant agreements we also being finalized between PennDOT and each transit provider. Transit providers are in the process of preparing service proposals which include project budgets A copy of the final service proposal will be forwarded to you when it is complete.

For More Information

For more information about the Pilot Project please contact Paul Gnazzo at 717-787-5144,
PA TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO SURVEY RURAL TRANSPORTATION NEEDS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

NEWS RELEASE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Department of Transportation
Press Office - Ninth Floor
Forum Place - 555 Walnut Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1900

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT:
Kirk Wilson
(717) 783-8800
(717) 787-2955

HARRISBURG (April 28) -- State Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Chairman P. Michael Liptak today announced that TAC is seeking input from persons with disabilities regarding public transportation needs in rural communities.

"The purpose of the survey is to determine the extent of unmet transportation needs and to identify the types of trips that are necessary," Liptak said. "The survey results will be a key component of a major evaluation of transportation needs of persons with disabilities."

Liptak said four rural areas in eight counties are being studied. They include Clearfield, Cumberland, Elk, Greene, Jefferson, Schuylkill, Washington and York counties.

TAC is an independent body that advises the State Transportation Commission and Transportation Secretary Bradley L. Mallory on major issues.

Liptak said the Statewide Independent Living Council, the Pennsylvania Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, the Pennsylvania Transportation Alliance and United Cerebral Palsy of Pennsylvania are assisting with the study.

"A core network of organizations serving persons with disabilities has been formed in each study area to help us reach as many persons as possible and to provide any needed assistance," Liptak said. "If you are a Pennsylvanian with a disability and live in one of the four study areas and have not participated in this survey, please contact us immediately."

Gannett Fleming Inc. is assisting the TAC study team in conducting the survey. Persons with questions or those who have not received a survey should call Toby Fauver, study project manager, at 1-800-233-1055.

Gov. Tom Ridge launched an historic Disabilities Agenda in May 1997 -- Pennsylvania's first comprehensive, government-wide program to explore ways state government can break down the barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from being included in the community. The plan covers issues involving transportation, housing, education, employment, long-term supports and health care.

http://164.156.5.76/penndot/News.../9537308e51a5a245852568e4005a84bc7OpenDocument 06/23/2000
Assessing the Availability of Transportation Services for Persons with Disabilities in Rural Pennsylvania

Work Order #5 Final Report

Gannett Fleming

June 2000
PRELIMINARY DATA ASSESSMENT REPORT
WORK ORDER # 5: AVAILABILITY OF TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN RURAL PENNSYLVANIA – FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS STUDY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pennsylvania State Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is authorized under state law to provide independent advice to the State Transportation Commission (STC) and the Secretary of Transportation on any issue of direct or indirect importance to the mobility of people and goods in the Commonwealth. TAC chose to examine the transportation needs of persons with disabilities for two important reasons. First, to begin closing the extensive information gap on the extent and nature of this population’s transportation needs in rural Pennsylvania. Second, to generate a range of recommendations that could be used to begin addressing a basic need of most people—the need for transportation. For the purpose of this study “rural” uses the Census definition, which applies to 65 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties—Allegheny (Pittsburgh) and Philadelphia counties being outside the definition.

1.1 BACKGROUND

In May 1997, the Governor's Disability Agenda included a directive that PennDOT along with representatives from other state agencies form a Rural Transportation Work Group. The Work Group was charged to:

1) Identify problems faced by persons with disabilities related to a lack of transportation services.
2) Inventory existing transportation systems in rural areas.
3) Develop recommendations as appropriate.

Public forums were held in August and September 1998. The problem most frequently voiced by persons with disabilities was “the limited availability of transportation services in rural areas.” Based on the forum
comments and the completed inventory of transportation services, the
work group concluded that it still lacked comprehensive and empirical data
on the scope, nature and extent of this mobility problem.

Without comprehensive data on the number of persons affected, their
geographical proximity to existing transportation services, ride patterns and
additional mobility barriers, the work group could not objectively or
responsibly recommend a sound policy solution. Additionally, without
knowing the characteristics of this market, the work group was unable to
project the cost of alternative approaches and whether the existing transit
agencies could accommodate additional riders, expand routes, or take other measures in order to make
transportation services more available and affordable to the
disability community. Since the purpose of this study was
to determine needs, the results of this report provide the
Commonwealth with base information that can yield
estimated ridership assumptions and estimates of
associated cost for pilot design.

During the same approximate time period, the State
Transportation Advisory Committee, an independent
committee with statutory authority to provide advice to the
State Transportation Commission, developed candidate
issues to study over the ensuing 4 years. The issue of
transportation for persons with disabilities in rural areas
was identified and scheduled for subsequent study. This
report is a direct result of the TAC Study effort.

1.2 METHODOLOGY & STUDY
PROCESS/ORGANIZATION

The study was carried out in a compressed time schedule to bring
closure to the analytical requirements necessary to properly develop policy
to address this issue. The following points summarize the study phases:

- Part A—Assessment of Available Data and Study Scope
  Refinement: existing sources of data—including census and
  program data from several agencies serving persons with disabilities
  —were reviewed to determine transportation needs. A map was
  produced depicting the locations of persons with disabilities in
  relation to existing transit/ADA service for Cumberland County as
  a test case. The mapping proved to be a valuable analytical break
  through and was developed statewide in later study phases.
The primary conclusion from Part A was that the existing data sources do not provide a comprehensive assessment of the transportation needs of persons with disabilities. TAC was then in a position to direct the consultants to develop a detailed study scope of work for the remaining study parts.

Part B—Consumer Survey and Other Data Collection: the centerpiece of the second study part entailed the development and distribution of a survey to over 9,200 persons with disabilities in four study areas (across 8 counties in Pennsylvania). TAC selected the following study areas with input from the disability community: York/Cumberland, Washington/Greene, Schuylkill, and Elk/Jefferson/Clearfield. Given the schedule constraints, a Core Network of organizations who serve persons with disabilities assisted in distributing the survey and encouraged the targeted audience to participate. The three major statewide organizations that emerged as leaders of the Core Network were: the Statewide Independent Living Council, PA Transportation Alliance and the PA Coalition for Persons with Disabilities. By the May 31, 2000 survey deadline, 1,729 survey responses were received for a 19% response rate. Part B also involved collecting information on the experiences of other states and the development of transportation profiles for the four study areas.

Part C—Findings & Recommendations—using the data obtained during Parts A and B, especially the extensive survey results, TAC worked with a stakeholders group of persons with disabilities to review the data and assess it with respect to drawing conclusions, recommendations, and the implementation of a select number of recommendations.

1.3 SUMMARY OF KEY MAJOR FINDINGS

The reader who is interested in a detailed understanding of the key findings should refer to Section A of the report. The following points summarize the overall findings:

1. There are substantial unmet transportation needs in rural areas for persons with disabilities. The majority of the survey respondents expressed such need and were largely 18 to 64 years of age, which

1The 19% response rate, in fact, is an underestimation as hundreds of additional surveys were received after the deadline and will be provided along with the 1,729 to PennDOT.

Gannett Fleming

June 2000
means they cannot receive subsidized fares under the existing shared ride program for senior citizens. The need for subsidized fares among this population is underscored by the fact that 86% of the survey respondents have incomes at or below $16,000 a year.

2. The lack of transportation services limits or restricts a large percentage of persons with disabilities from participating in a wide range of activities including but not limited to: employment, education, social functions, medical appointments, and shopping. The lack of transportation services poses a significant barrier to their quality of life and also adversely impacts Pennsylvania employers, many of whom are seeking labor and larger customer bases. Fixed route service typically has limited coverage in rural areas. As a result, persons with disabilities must rely heavily on family and friends for transportation services.

3. There is great variability in the types of disabilities, including but not limited to physical disabilities (50%), mental retardation (26%), and mental health (23%). This variability poses major challenges and implications to effectively designing a program that can serve a wide variety of people while recognizing that each person has his/her individual travel preferences and needs. Training relative to the different capabilities and needs of persons with disabilities is an essential element of any local service delivery system. Educating passengers on how to best schedule and use the services is also important. Further, the reality that no program can meet all of a person’s travel needs must also be reaffirmed so that the target audience’s level of expectations remains reasonable.

4. Extending fixed route services and/or expanding the Shared Ride Program beyond senior citizens to persons with disabilities will not meet all of the expressed transportation needs. Additionally, other barriers exist including the need for personal aides, sidewalks, lifts and ramps. While additional public transportation services are important, a more systematic approach is necessary to address these transportation barriers. PennDOT cannot solve this issue by itself. The following organizations and resources must work with PennDOT on this issue: local communities, agencies serving persons with disabilities, social service agencies and the disability community at large.

Gannett Fleming

June 2000
recommendations and the specific for implementation issues. At the highest level, five broad options for a Commonwealth direction are identified. The five “Broad Direction Options” are the major alternatives that the TAC considered in making a recommendation.

At the next level, considerations for implementation are presented in five categories that speak to the spectrum of issues regions will need to address in order to structure effective transportation programs for persons with disabilities. This effectively provides the Commonwealth with a “menu for implementation.” Most of the implementation options presented in this menu are relevant regardless of the broad direction chosen by the Commonwealth.

1.5 RECOMMENDATION

Based on this study, the TAC recommends to the STC that PennDOT implement a Pilot approach. The purpose for the Pilot is to provide service in a limited geographic setting while collecting data on usage, implementation, costs, operations, customer evaluation and marketing to develop recommendations for future program planning and design.

There are five specific components for the recommended Pilot described below.

1. Program Planning & Design – to effectively plan and design a service start up in a Pilot area(s) in order to effectively anticipate and address the wide range of implementation issues in a limited geographical setting.

The Pilot should be designed to provide a reasonable level of Commonwealth service to provide for core transit services and affordable fares. State funding may not be sufficient to meet the demand, so the Pilot should be designed in innovative ways (discussed in this report) to leverage other resources and participation.

In general, the Commonwealth should consider initiating pilot service through the existing transit/paratransit providers in those region(s) as a starting point. Recognizing that the need for this service may exceed the capacity of current providers, the pilot will be designed with flexibility to augment core service through
additional service options that meet overall service standards such as:

- Employers
- Retail Shopping and Service Centers
- Non-profit Organizations
- Others

The pilot approach is the most prudent course of action given the many implementation issues and challenges associated with such a complex issue. The pilot approach provides an essential opportunity to improve service design and deployment during the development phase. It also provides an opportunity to validate the trip making demand as identified in this study and to determine the associated costs.

2. Implementation Testing – to be able to test service implementation with respect to operating, marketing, program coordination, and other issues associated with the transit agencies, customers and the administering agency.

3. Data Collection – to collect various data that provides an in-depth understanding of program effectiveness, efficiency, and cost issues as well as the service usage.

4. Evaluation – to conduct a meaningful and broad-based evaluation of the Pilot(s) based on the data collected from actual usage of the service.

5. Recommendations – based on the 4 components above, develop recommendations and options to aid decision making with respect to future program expansion and implementation.

The pilot approach provides other benefits including the ability to begin service in a relatively short amount of time. The pilot option addresses the fundamental need for sound planning, design, implementation and evaluation that no other option affords.

1.5.1 IMPLEMENTATION START UP

TAC recommends an approximate 3-4 month pilot planning and design phase. The pilot provider in partnership with PennDOT would carry it
out. The report presents the following items to effectively implement a Pilot approach:

- Establish a Pilot Working Group
- Develop a Pilot Plan
- Provide Public Information and Two-way Communication
- Establish Pilot Budget
- Establish Service Hours
- Establish Scheduling Protocol
- Establish Registration Procedure and Database
- Initiate Service and Monitor.

**What the word respect means, especially for us seniors and disabled.**

Believe me, I am fed up with public transportation. I heard nothing about new taxi service in the area. They let people sit especially people with bad health, who are disabled.

It's really hard trying to get groceries or whatever else you have to do.

In closing, I hope you have a good time.

The Taxi Service improves those elderly and disabled.

Thank you much.
In Summer 2000, Pennsylvania's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) endorsed a study recommendation to improve the availability of transportation for people with disabilities in rural portions of Pennsylvania. In January 2001, the Governor and PennDOT implemented the recommended Pilot Project.

Pilot Project Description

The pilot project offers discounted fares to persons with disabilities, primarily as a continuation of the TAC study for further data collection and program development.

The pilot will collect data and information, which will be used to design a potential statewide program to provide limited, local, affordable public transportation to persons with disabilities in rural areas of the Commonwealth.

Everything is now and will continue to be over the next 18 months under development and subject to change/improvement. No matter how prepared the transportation providers are prior to implementation, there will be problems and issues to resolve throughout the project. Patience, communication and constructive criticism are needed.

Demands and options for providing additional service are being tested and measured. Some trip requests may not be addressed immediately; however, it is possible that, based on the assessment and availability of alternative service providers, these trips may be possible in the future. It is important for passengers to cooperate with reservationists with regard to trip response information. This information will assist transportation providers in making adjustments to current service.

All passengers will receive the same level of service. Transit providers will strive to maintain the service current passengers are accustomed to and expect. Service to current passengers should not be diminished.

The Pilot

Components of the pilot are highlighted below:

Program Planning & Design - the Commonwealth is beginning a pilot service through existing transportation providers.

Testing - pilot service will be tested with respect to operating, marketing program coordination.

Data Collection - data will be collected to provide an in-depth understanding of the program’s effectiveness, efficiency, and cost issues as well as the service usage.

Evaluation - to conduct a meaningful and broad-based evaluation of the Pilot(s) based on the data collected from actual usage of the service.

Recommendations - based on the four components above to aid in decision-making with respect to future program expansion and implementation.
Pilot Project Facts

The pilot will be conducted in eight counties around the Commonwealth.

- The pilot will provide discounted fares on accessible transportation services from January 2001 through June 2002 for eligible persons with disabilities in each pilot region.
- The current shared ride transportation provider will determine eligibility for these services and explore opportunities to use a variety of other transportation providers in the area.
- Service will have to be scheduled in advance.
- The service will operate across county lines where appropriate.
- There will be discounted fares for shared ride services for persons with disabilities.
- The service will attempt to meet as many trip requests as possible.
- The service will not replace the transportation services you presently receive.

During the pilot you may be asked to provide comments to improve service and/or to serve on a local advisory committee. Please be patient as this service begins. Transit providers will need you to work with them to improve the service delivery. You are an important partner in this effort.

IMPORTANT: Please let your transit provider know where and when you want to travel even though the service may not yet be offered. If enough people ask, the transportation provider may adjust its routes to meet your needs at a future date.

For additional information on your county, please contact the agencies listed below:

Cumberland County
Cumberland County Transportation Department
37 East High Street
Carlisle, PA 17013
(717) 240-6340 (Carlisle area) (800) 315-2546

Greene County
Community Action SouthWest
22 West High Street
Waynesburg, PA 15370-1324
(724) 627-6778
(877) 360-7433

Jefferson, Elk and Clearfield Counties
Area Transportation Authority of North Central Pennsylvania
44 Transportation Center
Johnsonburg, PA 15845
(866) ATA-4-YOU, or
(866) 282-4968

Washington County
Washington County Transportation Program
75 East Maiden Street, Suite 202
Washington, PA 15301
(724) 223-8747
(800) 331-5058

Schuylkill County
Schuylkill Transportation System
P.G. Box 67
St. Clair, PA 17970
(570) 429-2701
(800) 832-3323
T.D.D. (888) 972-2323

York County
Rabbittransit (York County Transportation Authority)
1230 Roosevelt Avenue
York, PA 17404
(717) 846-RIDE
(800) 632-9063
More than 102,000 people with disabilities live in areas of PA with no affordable, accessible transportation. The new shared-ride program brings affordable transportation to people with disabilities in 8 counties with an additional 16 counties scheduled to start service in April 2003. The Rural Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Program is making it possible for individuals to get to work and other important destinations.

"Transportation brings jobs; jobs do not lead to transportation. The Pilot Transportation Program has opened the socio-economic door for people with disabilities..."

Peggi Fawcett
Transitional Employment Consultants
Washington County
Affordable, Accessible Transportation for People with Disabilities in Cumberland County

By paving the way to low-cost transportation services, a pilot program launched this January will help to remove a major roadblock for people with disabilities in Cumberland County.

Cumberland County Transportation started the new Shared Ride Service for Persons with Disabilities on January 15. Cumberland County is one of eight rural counties responsible for testing this affordable, accessible public transportation program from January 2001 through June 2002. Successful implementation of the project could lead to a permanent statewide program.

Shared Ride Service for Persons with Disabilities aims to minimize the problems people with disabilities face each day in trying to get to work, school, medical appointments and to the market. This Shared Ride service will be available at reduced fares to all individuals with disabilities who qualify for the program.

You may be eligible for the Shared Ride Service for Persons with Disabilities if you are:

- A person with a disability AND
- Under 65 years old, (a separate program exists for senior citizens) AND
- Live in an area of Cumberland County that is not currently served by public fixed route bus transportation and ADA complimentary para-transit services.

For more information, or assistance in applying, call the Center for Independent Living of Central PA (CILCP) at:
Voice 1-800-323-6060 or TTY 1-800-829-7404
You may also contact Cumberland County Transportation at:
I-800-315-2546 or 717-240-6340
Dear Senator Joseph Scarnati,
Subject: Pilot Project

Recently I was informed that you will be at the local ATA transportation site on 1/8/2001 and wish to first of all thank you for taking time to listen to how the Pilot Program is operating in our area. I personally will not be able to make it to the meeting partly because the pilot program is working so well for me that I am able to teach Electrical and Instrumentation classes at the Industrial Technical Education Center located in Ridgway. Because I am paraplegic, transportation at the time I started to seek employment was a very important issue. When the employment opportunity came I had just been informed of the Pilot Program and worked with the ATA people to arrange transportation from my place of residence in Johnsonburg to Ridgway. The program has enabled me to arrange transportation without asking family or others to provide transport back and forth, this has been a great help in making this employment a enjoyable experience and the staff at ATA has been nothing but helpful and supportive to me. I hope that the program will continue so that I can continue to count on transportation without requiring additional assistance entering or exiting the vehicle. Once again I want to thank you for your time, and I also hope that this program is equally beneficial to any others in need of this service.

Claude Dornisch
E & I Instructor
I.T.E.C.
Dear Sen. Scarnati:

I am a client of the Persons with Disabilities Pilot Program and I want to tell you how much it helps me. The key word for me is INDEPENDENCE. It is great to be able to schedule a doctor's appointment when I want to go and not have to hunt someone who can take me to the doctor's appointment and then try to schedule an appointment when I have a ride.

It takes care of many errands like paying bills or shopping at my convenience and not worry about how much time I'm...
Going Ahead. I just call The Pilot project the day before and I can take my time, shopping and call when I'm ready to go home. The discounted price is very much appreciated too. I have a fixed income, so any discount is welcome.

I can make a lunch date with friends and Van will take me then and bring me home. It's so nice to know that we can have a limited time to eat and chat and then run. We can take time and then two Call The Van.

I can come and go like a physically normal person does; I don't have to stay home and wish I could go out. I can go out thanks to The Pilot Project.

The Pilot Project helps me keep my mind stimulated because I can get out of the house and do something instead of vegetating by the TV.

It's a wonderful program and I'm so glad I have had the privilege to be a part of it.
I hope the program will continue. I look forward to using the Pilot project to help me get out to do Christmas shopping instead of sitting at home and ordering from a catalog. I know I will enjoy the sounds and smells and atmosphere of being out among people doing holiday errands.

Sincerely yours,

Marlene Roy

Ph 814-375-2157
Ms. Ginny Rogers, Coordinator
Pennsylvania Transportation Alliance
415 Fallowfield Road, Suite 101
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania 17011

Dear Ms. Rogers,

Governor Schweiker has asked me to respond to your December 5, 2001 letter regarding rural transportation for persons with disabilities.

I have advised the Governor that this department supports a program to provide transportation options for persons with disabilities in rural areas of the Commonwealth. The Governor and his staff are currently in the midst of budget deliberations. They are considering the recommendations of all departments with regard to many programs designed to address a wide range of needs throughout the Commonwealth. Decisions regarding the Pilot Project and a potential statewide program in fiscal year 2002-03 will be made through the budget process and will be announced in February 2002. I feel confident that the Governor will give rural transportation for persons with disabilities every consideration.

Thank you for expressing your support.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Bradley L. Mallory, Secretary
Department of Transportation
December 21, 2001

The Honorable Mark Schweiker
Governor
225 Main Capitol
Harrisburg PA 17120

Dear Governor Schweiker,

I am writing on behalf of the Developmental Disabilities Council to thank the administration for the Rural Transportation Project for Persons with Disabilities funded by the Department of Transportation and to urge the retention and expansion of this project in next year's budget.

The Council has worked with people with disabilities and the advocacy community for a number of years to ensure that rural Pennsylvanians can have access to affordable, accessible transportation. Access to transportation is critical to meaningful participation in the lives of our communities and ensures access to work, education and medical services.

In the first nine months of the pilot project the majority of trips have been for work purposes, ensuring critical economic participation by people with disabilities. An expansion of the program to other rural counties will ensure that many other Pennsylvanians will have similar opportunities.

Again, we appreciate the leadership of the Department of Transportation in mounting these demonstration projects, and urge their continuation and expansion in future years. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Graham Mutholland
Executive Director

RX TIME 12/21 '01 10:27
Dear Governor Schweiker,

Dec. 31, 2009

I am sending in a request for the "Shared Ride Program." At present, I am not on any Transportation Program. Here in Bedford County, it is hard for me to get to my Doctor's Appointments and Stores without Transportation.


Hubert Swoope Sr.
174 Kinzey St.
Saxton, PA 16678
Bedford County
Ph (814) 623-3583

RX TIME 01-02 '02 16:01