

Wisconsin Association of Mobility Managers

New Directions in Transportation



Wisconsin Association of Mobility Managers supports key actions that will create lasting change to improve transportation for all.

State Priorities 2021

HELP MOBILITY MANAGERS SERVE THOSE NEEDING TRANSPORTATION

Specialized transportation funding for Wisconsin older adults and people with disabilities is critical as the number of people needing these services grows. Those living in rural areas often face great challenges getting places due to lack of public transportation and long distances between destinations. An important funding source is the State 85.22 specialized assistance program that supplements federal funding to aid eligible applicants with transit capital, mobility management, and operating projects that serve seniors and individuals with disabilities. The funding level of the 85.22 specialized transportation assistance programs has remained - at \$912,700 annually for the last 10 years, despite growing demand.

THE FIX

WAMM requests an increase in specialized transportation (85.22) capital and operations funding 20% (\$183,000) to assist with operations, replacement or acquisition of new transit vehicles and expand mobility management services needed to meet our needs as we age. Inflationary increases are needed on an annual basis to ensure the specialized transportation system can maintain existing service while setting the stage for increased funding and capacity in the future.

REDUCE BARRIERS FOR VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

There are over 60 volunteer driving programs in WI which are critical to the transportation network for older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income workers. Several programs continue to report issues with volunteer drivers gaining and keeping vehicle insurance coverage. Volunteers are still being told that due to their volunteer driving activities they are being classified the same as the profit-making Transportation Network Companies or livery services and require more costly insurance. Many of our most vulnerable citizens rely on the goodness of volunteers to access medical services, buy necessities, and remain employed and active in the community. Continuing insurance issues faced by volunteer drivers illustrate the need for the legislature to intervene and alleviate barriers to becoming a volunteer driver.

THE FIX

WAMM requests legislation be enacted to prohibit insurers from imposing surcharges, increasing rates, or refusing to issue a policy solely because someone is a volunteer driver. The situation has become dire for many areas of the state where volunteers are the only feasible and economical option.

COORDINATION OF TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES

The demand for transportation far exceeds the available resources, especially in rural areas. It will be important to create and maintain an equitable and accessible network no matter where in the state someone lives, how much they can afford to pay, and what services they need and can access. The goal is to expand service through complimentary services, not replacement. In order to most effectively use private and public transportation resources and respond to cutting edge technology, advocates and stakeholders recommend the creation of a state-level, interdepartmental council to create a strategic action plan for statewide transportation coordination and to respond to new, innovative and technology-based opportunities.

THE FIX

WAMM supports incentivizing coordination among state and local transportation systems, including the creation of a statutory Transportation Coordination Council.

Federal Priorities 2021

INCENTIVIZE CHARITABLE DRIVING

Volunteer driver programs play a key role in the transportation network for older adults, people with disabilities, Veterans, and individuals living in rural areas, who otherwise would not be able to reach medical appointments, obtain groceries, get to Job Centers or Division of Vocational Rehabilitation appointments, and other essential services. In some cases, volunteer driver programs are the only option for the rider. Current law allows for reimbursement of volunteers on a nontaxable basis up to the charitable mileage rate of \$0.14 per mile. Unlike the business and medical/moving rate, which are regulated by the IRS and adjusted to account for the increasing cost of operating a vehicle, the charitable rate can only be adjusted through the legislative process. Even though volunteers experience these same increasing costs, the charitable mileage reimbursement rate has not been adjusted since 1997.

THE FIX

Raise the charitable driving reimbursement rate for the first time in over 20 years to equal the current standard business mileage.

HELP MOBILITY MANAGERS SERVE THOSE NEEDING TRANSPORTATION

FTA's Section 5310 program, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities provides funds for transportation services for those who are unable to be served by more conventional public transit and para-transit programs. Section 5310 funding is used for capital and operating projects that improve the mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities. This specialized transportation program helps fund the acquisition of buses and vans and other capital assets, supports mobility management and travel training programs, and helps expand the accessibility of transportation services. Each year, funding requests for this competitive grant far exceeds funds available. This is expected to continue and increase as more communities realize the benefits of mobility management, grow services, and need replacement vehicles.

THE FIX

Increase the FTA Section 5310 funding and to continue to allow funds to be used for either capital assistance or operating assistance.

<https://www.wi-mm.org/>

What is Mobility Management?

- Mobility Management is an approach to designing and delivering transportation services that starts and ends with the customer.
- Mobility Managers teach people how to use transit, educate communities about transportation options, coordinate trips, manage volunteer driver programs, organize van pools, run call centers and much more.
- Transportation is essential to almost every activity that takes place within a community. Mobility Managers creatively help individuals find the most efficient, cost effective way to get where they need to go.



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