

SENATE BILL NO. 160  
INTRODUCED BY T. SCHMIDT  
BY REQUEST OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, TRANSPORTATION DISTRICTS, AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO USE MONEY FROM THE SENIOR CITIZEN AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ACCOUNT AS MATCHING FUNDS FOR FEDERAL GRANTS; AND AMENDING SECTION 7-14-112, MCA."

WHEREAS, MONTANA'S SENIOR CITIZENS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES RELY ON HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS FOR ESSENTIAL TRANSPORTATION TO WORK, HEALTH CARE SERVICES, AND RECREATION; AND

WHEREAS, THESE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND SYSTEMS CAN BE EXPANDED BY USING STATE FUNDING, KNOWN AS TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED AND ELDERLY OR TRANSADÉ, TO MATCH INCREASES IN FEDERAL TRANSIT FUNDING; AND

WHEREAS, THIS EXPANSION OF SERVICE ADDRESSES COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO MONTANA'S TRANSIT-DEPENDENT RESIDENTS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1.** Section 7-14-112, MCA, is amended to read:

**"7-14-112. Senior citizen and persons with disabilities transportation services account -- use.** (1)

There is a senior citizen and persons with disabilities transportation services account in the state special revenue fund. Money must be deposited in the account pursuant to 15-1-122(3)(e).

(2) Except as provided in subsection (6), the account must be used to provide operating funds or matching funds for operating grants pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 5311 to counties, incorporated cities and towns, transportation districts, or nonprofit organizations for transportation services for persons 60 years of age or older and for persons with disabilities.

(3) (a) Subject to the conditions of subsection (3)(b), the department of transportation is authorized to award grants to counties, incorporated cities and towns, transportation districts, and nonprofit organizations for transportation services using guidelines established in the state management plan for the purposes described

in 49 U.S.C. 5310 and 5311.

(b) Priority for awarding grants must be determined according to the following factors:

(i) the most recent census or federal estimate of persons 60 years of age or older and persons with disabilities in the area served by a county, incorporated city or town, transportation district, or nonprofit organization;

(ii) the annual number of trips provided by the transportation provider to persons 60 years of age or older and to persons with disabilities in the transportation service area;

(iii) the ability of the transportation provider to provide matching money in an amount determined by the department of transportation; and

(iv) the coordination of services as required in subsection (5).

(4) The department of transportation shall ensure that the available funding is distributed equally among the five transportation districts provided in 2-15-2502.

(5) In awarding grants, the department of transportation shall give preference to proposals that:

(a) include the establishment of a transit authority to coordinate service area or regional transportation services;

(b) address and document the transportation needs within the community, county, and service area or region;

(c) identify all other transportation providers in the community, county, and service area or region;

(d) explain how services are going to be coordinated with the other transportation providers in the service area or region;

(e) indicate how services are going to be expanded to meet the unmet needs of senior citizens and disabled persons within the community, county, and service area or region who are dependent upon public transit;

(f) include documentation of coordination with other local transportation programs within the community, county, and service area or region, including:

(i) utilization of existing resources and equipment to maximize the delivery of service; and

(ii) the projected increase in ridership and expansion of service;

(g) invite school districts to participate or be included in the transportation coordination efforts within the community, county, and service area or region; and

(h) at a minimum, comply with the provisions in subsections (5)(b) through (5)(f).

(6) Any amount of money remaining after grants have been awarded to transportation providers who provide transportation services for persons 60 years of age or older and persons with disabilities may be awarded

to other transportation providers for operating costs or matching funds for operating grants for the purposes described in 49 U.S.C. 5311 other than for transportation services for persons 60 years of age or older or persons with disabilities."

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