iTNCentralCT™
Dignified transportation for seniors
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Submitted by: Beth A. Shovlin, Program Director

SB664: AN ACT CONCERNING INDEPENDENT TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

I am here today to represent the 13,025 seniors and visually impaired persons as identified in the 2000 census and 1,748 as having difficulty going outside the home alone.

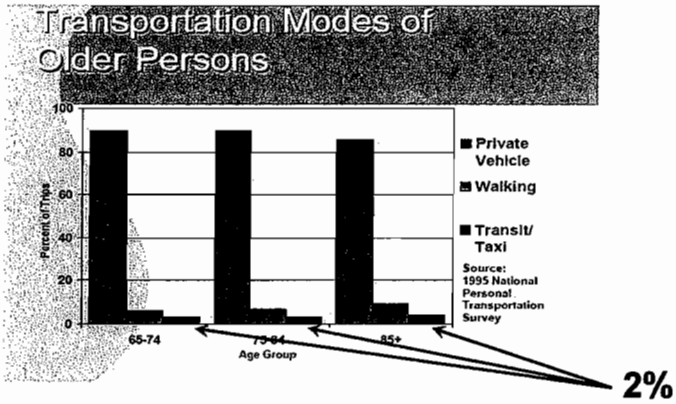
The need for senior transportation is well documented. Your foresight in 2006 created the opportunity for solutions in Central Connecticut.

ITN*CentralConnecticut*™ is an affiliate of ITN*America*® which is the first and only national non-profit transportation network for America's aging population. The ITN® model marries the power of information technology and the strength of local, grassroots support to create an efficient and financially sustainable solution to the transportation needs of seniors and their families.

The Independent Transportation Network® is a trademarked brand, not a generic name. Through the ITNRides™ software Connecticut families connect to all other ITN® affiliates throughout the nation. If you spend the winter in Orlando, Florida as a member of ITN*CentralConnecticut*™ you can use your Personal Transportation Account to ride while you are there. In addition, my daughter in Chicago can volunteer to drive there and transfer credits into my Personal Transportation Account™ here.

ITN® relies on a combination of volunteer and paid drivers, integrating them seamlessly in the service – a capability that is unique among senior transportation providers. Through the efficiency of the ITNRides™ software system, volunteers who in a typical transportation service could drive one person can now drive four, five or six, instead. If volunteers are not available ITN® solves this problem with paid drivers – a practice that ensures the service is reliable and responsive to customer needs.

Senior Drivers



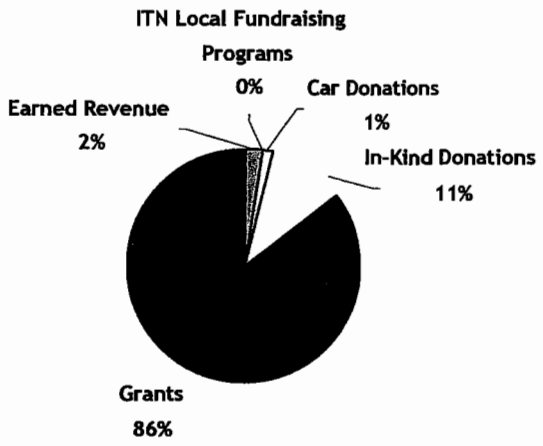
The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration found that older persons seldom use mass transit...
they would rather use private vehicles.

In a recent survey, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration found that only 2% of seniors would be willing to use mass transit. For those who cannot or choose not to drive we need to provide alternatives that are safe, affordable, dependable and user-friendly so that people can stay connected to vendors, services and social activities in their communities.

All rides for ITN® members are provided in private automobiles. Service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Members can call for a ride at any time. We are about preserving the dignity of older people. When they call for a ride members are calling a service that they have pre-paid for, they are not asking anyone for a favor.

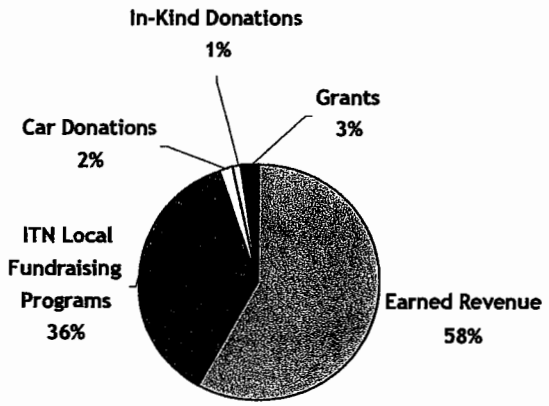
We provide door-through-door, arm-through-arm rides. Volunteer drivers are trained to preserve the dignity of members and to meet them at their door. We help carry packages, walkers and other items.

Year 1



Affiliates of ITN*America*® act as social entrepreneurs and follow proven business practices. To begin we needed to raise $125,000 and are allowed a mix of government and foundation funds. We received a grant of $50,000 from the State of Connecticut, Department of Social Services, $17,500 from the Great Bay Foundation, $10,000 from the Middlesex United Way, $10,000 from the Aetna Foundation, $5,000 from Middletown Department of Health, $5,000 from Middlesex Hospital, $5,000 from Town of Wethersfield, $2,550 from various Middletown medical providers and $2,275 from Middletown residents.

Year 5



By the fifth year we will be totally free of taxpayer support. We become self-sustaining through a combination of earned revenue and local community support. We will generate 50-60% of revenue from members and raise the balance through local fundraising programs including car donations and foundations. For ITN*CentralConnecticut*™ the $50,000 grant from the State of Connecticut, Department of Social Services, was an investment, not a subsidy.

We have a number of ways for the community to support us. Ride & Shop™ and Healthy Miles™ are programs where merchants or medical providers contract with us to pay part of the ride for their customers. It is an important program. ITN® helps drive the local economy. The impact on the local business community of just one ITN® affiliate is between $300,000 and $500,000 per year. By 2010, the expected annual economic impact of ITN® affiliates will be as much as $20 million.

We are an independent, non-profit corporation. We have a strong Board of Directors of 13 people that represent banking, law, transportation, social services and the community at large. We anticipate a small staff including an Executive Director, an AmeriCorpsVISTA member, a dispatcher, part-time bookkeeper, paid driver and contract IT support.

Over 60 percent of our drivers will be between 50 and 74. Regardless of whether they are paid of volunteer, they are typically retired and seek to give back to their communities.