



Town of Burlington

Kathleen K. Zabel
First Selectman

James A. Chard
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Board of Selectmen

**TESTIMONY REGARDING
RAISED BILL 1093
AN ACT PROVIDING FUNDS FOR
MUNICIPAL MATCHING GRANTS FOR
DEMAND-RESPONSIVE
TRANSPORTATION FOR ELDERLY
PERSONS AND PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES**

As the budget deficit grows, we are seeing more basic services affected by cuts that render them ineffective. The Transportation Grant for the Elderly and those with disabilities is beyond value in many small towns like Burlington, where there is no form of mass transportation. Our Senior Citizen van provides essential rides running the gamut from primary care doctors to grocery stores, and all the other necessary points our disabled and elderly need to access. When you look at the 169 cities and towns in Connecticut, each is unique, but we all have the most basic duty of providing for those who cannot provide for themselves. Our Dial-A-Ride Program is the only community based transportation for these citizens, and is their conduit to an independent environment. Because Burlington is a small town of 9,000 people, should we lose our ability to access these matching grants, we will be without a means for the very people who need it most to get the basics of life. We would be in the position of having to tell the elders of our society that there is no way for them to access health care or, more immediately, food to fill their larders.

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Yes, we have a State budget deficit. Yes, we have to find innovative ways to fix the problem. No, we should not lose the 50% matching grant from the State specifically targeted to assist the elderly and the disabled. We are a people of compassion and nobody is asking for a “free ride”, no pun intended. All the towns who participate in this have been able to locally budget their 50% and use it wisely for the benefit of those who are cited as needing it. We ask that the State continue to help in the positive impact this matching grant has on our large elderly and disabled population.

Kathleen Kelly Zabel
First Selectman, Burlington