



TESTIMONY
of the
CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES
to the
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

March 7, 2011

CCM is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 90% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony to you on issues of concern to towns and cities.

CCM supports SB 700 "An Act Concerning the State Matching Grant Program for Municipal and Regional Demand Responsive Transportation for Persons with a Disability Who are Sixty of More Years of Age."

SB 700 would restore five million dollars for the state matching grant program for municipal and regional demand responsive transportation for persons with a disability, who are sixty or more years of age.

In 1999, the Dial-A-Ride program was created to make state matching grants to municipalities for elderly and disabled demand responsive transportation programs; it was not until FY 2005 that the funds were made available. The program was allocated \$5 million a year each for FY 06 and FY 07.

The Governor's current budget proposes to cap the matching grant at \$3 million dollars. However, according to OFA, \$4 million has been awarded for FY 11 and \$4.1 million is estimated to be awarded in FY 12. Passage of this bill would ensure adequate funding for the program and ensure that the needs of Connecticut's most vulnerable citizens are met.

At a time when demand for existing service and requests for expanded service increase daily, municipal dial-a-ride programs are struggling to maintain existing service given that a static level of funding is available. Some towns have reduced service to meet budget constraints.

If enacted, S.B 700 would address these budget constraints by providing five million dollars in municipal matching grants.

CCM urges the Committee to ***favorably report*** S.B 700.

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If you have any questions, please contact Donna Hamzy, Legislative Associate of CCM via email dhamzy@ccm-ct.org or via phone (203) 843-0705.