

TESTIMONY OF
CURTIN TRANSPORTATION
BEFORE THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
February 13, 2019

RE: Senate Bill 66

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE NONEMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION OF ELDERLY PERSONS AND
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES CONFINED TO A STRETCHER**

Good morning, my name is Joseph Miller, I am the General Manager for the Curtin Transportation Group. We are a third generation family owned company that has provided a wide range of transportation services in Connecticut for more than 100 years. We have offices in Waterford, Waterbury, and Stratford. We employ more than 250 men and women in Connecticut.

Most importantly our company has safely transported passengers utilizing sedans, wheelchair vans and until the change in the definition of ambulance service, passengers utilizing stretcher vans.

WE SUPPORT THE PASSAGE OF Senate Bill 66.

The language contained in Senate Bill 66 is the result of language submitted concerning this issue in previous sessions and amendments offered to ensure passenger safety.

The people that would utilize a stretcher van are passengers that need to be transported by stretcher and not patients. They are passengers that need to be transported by stretcher without medical needs during such transportation.

Patients needing suction, wound care, intravenous care, or other medical needs would not be transported by a stretcher van because they are patients - not passengers.

Not all seniors who wish to visit family or attend community functions; workers with a temporary disability; persons with a life-long disability, or persons seeking nonemergency care need medical care while being transported.

SB 66 requires that the person requiring transportation:

- Need non-emergency transportation;
- Must be transported utilizing a stretcher;
- Does not require medical services during transport;
- Obtains prior approval by a written statement from a (licensed medical provider) that this mode of transportation is appropriate;
- And that in addition to the driver, a trained attendant would accompany the person transported in a stretcher van.

These are the same requirements that passed with PA 12-1 and 2017 SB 345 as amended.

We believe that the use of stretcher vans is better for the passenger and makes financial sense for Connecticut. Senate Bill 66 would:

- Allow individuals with a disability utilizing a stretcher that want to visit loved ones or attend a senior center function to utilize this service without having to pay the higher costs of ambulance service.
- Save small businesses money by lowering workers compensation costs through an alternative method of transportation to a person utilizing a stretcher.
- Save small businesses and individual's money by lowering health care costs through an alternative method of transportation to a person utilizing a stretcher.
- Save individuals and families money by providing an alternative method of transportation to a person utilizing a stretcher needing transportation not covered by Medicaid.
- Improve a person's quality of life by offering a mode of transportation that is not confused by neighbors with a medical emergency at a cost lower than ambulance service.
- Result in savings to Connecticut taxpayers of an estimated \$3.4 million to \$13.3 million bi-annually. OLR RESEARCH REPORT 2011-R-0140 April 11, 2011.
- Increase revenue to Connecticut in the amount of \$2.7 million bi-annually inasmuch as livery transportation, stretcher van transportation is subject to sales tax.

In addition, utilizing stretcher van transportation as a form of MEDICAID transportation where appropriate would save the State of Connecticut between \$3.4 mil to \$13.3 mil bi-annually in MEDICAID costs, as reported in OLR Report 2011-R-0140.

CURRENTLY, THE STATE OF NEW YORK ENJOYS A 50% MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT FOR ITS STRETCHER AMBULLETTE TRANSPORTATION.

In addition, passage of this bill would result in the generation of \$2.7 mil in sales tax revenue bi-annually through private pay stretcher van livery transportation.

Please note that the language in Senate Bill 66 ensures that stretcher van transportation be medically appropriate for passengers by requiring that the passenger's primary care physician give prior authorization to such transport. We support that common sense requirement.

Additionally, by allowing livery companies to perform this service to individuals with disabilities, ambulance companies can assign more emergency vehicles to medical calls for service for patients requiring emergency medical services.

Most importantly, passage of SB 66 will improve an individual who utilizes a stretcher's quality of life by removing the stigma of constantly needing ambulance transportation for everyday activities. It also makes fiscal sense to Connecticut during these challenging fiscal times.

Please favorably report SB 66. It is better for the passengers and better for the state of Connecticut.