

JOINT LEGISLATIVE TASKFORCE ON TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Interested Party Testimony

Name, Title

April 28, 2016

Senator Manning, Representative Grossman, and other committee members, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify about transportation funding in Ohio.

Statewide, more and more of our aging population and people with disabilities are seeking to “age in place” or are able live as part of inclusive communities. The Scripps Gerontology Center has estimated that by 2050, nearly 30% of Ohio’s population will be 65 or older.<sup>1</sup> That population will want to “age in place” rather than go into nursing homes.

Likewise, as of 2012, the majority of people with developmental disabilities nationwide lived either in a community based residence (38%) or with a parent or relative (34%),<sup>2</sup> and people with physical disabilities are moving from a reliance on nursing homes to living in their own apartments. Much of these populations are unable to drive due to disability and rely on public transportation to get places like work, medical appointments, social events, and shopping. In short, they rely on public transportation to live and participate in their communities.

At the same time, the Ohio Transit Needs Study completed in 2015 identified that Ohio needs to invest an additional \$273.5 million dollars to bring Ohio’s transit fleet into good repair, and an additional \$192.4 million dollars is needed to expand public transportation to meet the expanding need.<sup>3</sup> Ohio ranks 38<sup>th</sup> out of 51 in its transit spending per capital in comparison to other states.<sup>4</sup>

Ohio must identify alternate sources of funding for transportation in Ohio and additional funding must be dedicated to increased funding for public transportation. Pennsylvania recently created a five- year plan that will produce an additional \$2.3 billion dollars for transportation through 1) increasing or instituting fees, such as a \$1 fee per new tire; 2) reforming its gas tax, including eliminating the retail gas tax and adjusting the tax on distributors.

We recommend that Ohio follow Pennsylvania’s example in instituting new, small fees and reforming its gas tax to help our public transportation system catch up to its expanding need. In conjunction, we recommend that Ohio remove the constitutional restriction on our gas tax that limits its funding to highways and dedicate a larger portion of Ohio’s Federal Highway Funds to public transit.

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<sup>1</sup> Scripps Gerontology Center, *An Aging Ohio*, available at <http://miamioh.edu/cas/academics/centers/scripps/research/ohio-long-term-care-research/index.html> (accessed April 15, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> National Council on Disability, *Home and Community Based Services: Creating Systems for Success at Home, Work, and in the Community*, 86, available at [https://www.ncd.gov/rawmedia\\_repository/HCBS%20Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ncd.gov/rawmedia_repository/HCBS%20Report_FINAL.pdf) (accessed April 15, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio Statewide Transit Needs Study: Findings Snapshot, available at <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/TransitNeedsStudy/Documents/FindingsSnapshotLetterSize.pdf> (accessed 4/15/2016).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 1.

These measures could bring in new revenue to preserve and expand what is available for those Ohioans that rely on public transit, much of which is currently unreliable and limited in the hours that it runs and locations that it is able to reach.