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HOUSE BILL NO. 2600

Offered January 22, 2009

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 15 of Chapter 1 of Title 33.1 a section numbered 33.1-223.2:21, relating to providing transportation services to the transportation disadvantaged.*

Patrons—McClellan, Bowling and Hall

Referred to Committee on Transportation

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 15 of Chapter 1 of Title 33.1 a section numbered 33.1-223.2:21 as follows:

§ 33.1-223.2:21. *Transportation services for the transportation disadvantaged.*

A. *As used in this section:*

"Community transportation coordinator" means a transportation entity recommended by a metropolitan planning organization or by the appropriate designated official planning agency in an area outside the purview of a metropolitan planning organization to ensure that coordinated transportation services are provided to the transportation-disadvantaged population in a designated service area;

"Coordination" means the arrangement for the provision of transportation services to the transportation disadvantaged in a manner that is cost-effective, efficient, and reduces fragmentation and duplication of services;

"Local coordinating bodies" means advisory entities in each designated service area composed of representatives appointed by the metropolitan planning organization or designated official planning agency to provide assistance to the community transportation coordinator relative to the coordination of transportation services;

"Metropolitan planning organization" means the organization responsible for carrying out transportation planning and programming in accordance with the provisions of 23 U.S.C. s. 134, as provided in 23 U.S.C. s. 104 (f) (3);

"Transportation disadvantaged" means those persons who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation and are therefore dependent upon others to obtain access to health care, employment, education, shopping, social activities, or other life-sustaining activities, or children who are handicapped, high-risk, or at-risk;

"Transportation disadvantaged funds" means any local government, state, or available federal funds that are for the transportation of the transportation disadvantaged, including but not limited to funds for planning, Medicaid transportation, administration, operation, procurement, and maintenance of vehicles or equipment and capital investments, but excluding funds for the transportation of children to public schools; and

"Transportation operator" means one or more public, private for-profit, or private nonprofit entities engaged by the community transportation coordinator to provide service to transportation-disadvantaged persons pursuant to a coordinated system service plan.

B. Coordination of transportation services provided to the transportation disadvantaged shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. Timely, cost-effective, and efficient transportation provided by qualified community transportation coordinators or transportation operators that reduce fragmentation and duplication of services;

2. The coordination of all transportation-disadvantaged programs with appropriate local, state, and federal agencies and public transit agencies to ensure compatibility with existing transportation systems and the most efficient use of transportation-disadvantaged funds;

3. Maximization of use of public school transportation and public fixed-route or fixed-schedule transit services for the provision of services to the transportation disadvantaged; and

4. The development of local coordinating bodies to provide information, advice, and direction to community transportation coordinators.

C. The Commonwealth Transportation Board shall seek to ensure that:

1. All available information on transportation operations for and needs of the transportation disadvantaged in the Commonwealth is compiled;

2. The barriers prohibiting the coordination and accessibility of transportation services to the transportation disadvantaged are identified; and

3. The Commonwealthwide objectives for providing transportation services to the transportation

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59 *disadvantaged are established and a long-range transportation disadvantaged plan is developed that:*
60 *a. Addresses the transportation problems and needs of the transportation disadvantaged;*
61 *b. Includes policies and procedures for the coordination of local, state, and federal funding for the*
62 *transportation disadvantaged;*
63 *c. Includes mechanisms for providing assistance to communities in developing transportation systems*
64 *designed to serve the transportation disadvantaged, including establishment of local coordination bodies*
65 *and designation of community transportation coordinators;*
66 *d. Is fully coordinated with local transit plans and compatible with local government comprehensive*
67 *plans;*
68 *e. Includes minimum performance standards for the delivery of services to the transportation*
69 *disadvantaged; and*
70 *f. Ensures that a cost-effective and efficient method of providing transportation to the transportation*
71 *disadvantaged is developed.*