

Committee Members:

I would encourage your to consider and pass out the Transportation concept relating to transit services. This concept was part of the omnibus transportation bill considered during the last session and, to my recollection had bipartisan support. The bill related to administrative changes to lower the cost of ODOT's administration of the former small program target to transit services for the elderly and disabled by merging it administratively with the broader transit program enabled by enactment of the payroll tax from the 2017 transportation bill.

In the original 2017 bill the new funding was directly targeted at expanding services and addressing service to low-income riders. During this pandemic, regular transit service has been greatly curtailed and continued transit operations threatened. This is especially the case for smaller transit providers in non-urban areas. At this point it makes sense to temporarily allow transit agencies to use the added funding to maintain and stabilize their services until we get out of this pandemic crisis. The assumption is that the Transportation Commission, through already required service plans, will ensure that once possible the transit agencies will return to expanding service as originally envisioned.

I hope you will consider moving this concept forward.

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