

A bill for an act
relating to transportation; creating Minnesota Council on Transportation Access
to improve availability and coordination of services to the transit public;
requiring a report; appropriating money; proposing coding for new law in
Minnesota Statutes, chapter 174.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. [174.285] MINNESOTA COUNCIL ON TRANSPORTATION ACCESS.

Subdivision 1. Council established. A Minnesota Council on Transportation
Access is established to study, evaluate, oversee, and make recommendations to improve
the coordination, availability, accessibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and safety of
transportation services provided to the transit public. "Transit public" means those persons
who utilize public transit and those who, because of mental or physical disability, income
status, or age are unable to transport themselves and are dependent upon others for
transportation services.

Subd. 2. Duties of council. In order to accomplish the purposes in subdivision 1,
the council shall adopt a biennial work plan that must incorporate the following activities:

(1) compile information on existing transportation alternatives for the transit public,
and serve as a clearinghouse for information on services, funding sources, innovations,
and coordination efforts;

(2) identify best practices and strategies that have been successful in Minnesota and
in other states for coordination of local, regional, state, and federal funding and services;

(3) establish statewide objectives for providing public transportation services for the
transit public;

(4) identify barriers prohibiting coordination and accessibility of public
transportation services and aggressively pursue the elimination of those barriers;

(5) develop and implement policies and procedures for coordinating local, regional, state, and federal funding and services for the transit public;

(6) identify stakeholders in providing services for the transit public, and seek input from them concerning barriers and appropriate strategies;

(7) establish guidelines for developing transportation coordination plans throughout the state;

(8) encourage all state agencies participating in the council to purchase trips within the coordinated system;

(9) facilitate the creation and operation of transportation brokerages to match riders to the appropriate service, promote shared dispatching, compile and disseminate information on transportation options, and promote regional communication;

(10) encourage volunteer driver programs and recommend legislation to address liability and insurance issues;

(11) establish minimum performance standards for delivery of services;

(12) identify methods to eliminate fraud and abuse in special transportation services;

(13) develop a standard method for addressing liability insurance requirements for transportation services purchased, provided, or coordinated;

(14) design and develop a contracting template for providing coordinated transportation services;

(15) develop an interagency uniform contracting and billing and accounting system for providing coordinated transportation services;

(16) encourage the design and development of training programs for coordinated transportation services;

(17) encourage the use of public school transportation vehicles for the transit public;

(18) develop an allocation methodology that equitably distributes transportation funds to compensate units of government and all entities that provide coordinated transportation services;

(19) identify policies and necessary legislation to facilitate vehicle sharing; and

(20) advocate aggressively for eliminating barriers to coordination, implementing coordination strategies, enacting necessary legislation, and appropriating resources to achieve the council's objectives.

Subd. 3. **Membership.** (a) The council is comprised of the following members who serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority:

(1) two members of the senate, one from the majority party appointed by the majority leader, and one from the minority party appointed by the minority leader;

(2) two members of the house of representatives, one appointed by the speaker of the house and one appointed by the minority leader;

(3) one representative from the Office of the Governor;

(4) one representative from the Council on Disability;

(5) one representative from the Minnesota Public Transit Association;

(6) the commissioner of transportation or a designee;

(7) the commissioner of human services or a designee;

(8) the commissioner of health or a designee;

(9) the chair of the Metropolitan Council or a designee;

(10) the commissioner of education or a designee;

(11) the commissioner of veterans affairs or a designee;

(12) one representative from the Board on Aging;

(13) the commissioner of employment and economic development or a designee;

(14) the commissioner of commerce or a designee; and

(15) the commissioner of finance or a designee.

(b) All appointments required by paragraph (a) must be completed by August 1, 2009.

(c) The commissioner of transportation or a designee shall convene the first meeting of the council within two weeks after the members have been appointed to the council. The members shall elect a chairperson from their membership at the first meeting.

(d) The Department of Transportation and the Department of Human Services shall provide necessary staff support for the council.

Subd. 4. **Report.** By January 15 of each year, beginning in 2011, the council shall report its findings, recommendations, and activities to the governor's office and to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over transportation, health, and human services, and to the legislature as provided under section 3.195.

Subd. 5. **Compensation.** Members of the committee shall receive compensation and reimbursement of expenses as provided in section 15.059, subdivision 3.

Subd. 6. **Expiration.** This section expires June 30, 2013.

Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION.

\$300,000 is appropriated from in fiscal years 2010 and 2011 to the commissioner of transportation for the administrative expenses of the council created in section 1, and for other costs relating to the preparation of the reports required under section 1, including the costs of hiring a consultant, if needed.