



of Wisconsin Disability Organizations

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2011-2013 Legislative Budget and Policy Priorities

TRANSPORTATION

Accessible and affordable transportation services play a major role in determining how independent, productive, and integrated older adults and people with disabilities can be in their community.

Survival Recommendations:

- Increasing the State's investment by \$5 million in the next two years would improve access to vital transportation services
- Provide easy access to scheduling rides and maintain current level of service delivery
- Ensure Volunteer Driver Program is not negatively impacted
- Family Care and Partnership Programs need to include and fund transportation for community activities in members' plans

Background: People with disabilities, particularly people with severe disabilities, cannot live independently in the community without transportation services. Access to employment, education, and health care are all affected by the availability of transportation for people with different mobility needs. The State's investment in the Specialized Transportation Assistance Program (85.21) for the elderly and disabled, however, is only a fraction of what is needed. Counties are forced to divert funds from other equally critical human services to make up the difference. Access to transportation services remains limited. In the 2009-2011 Budget we received a \$1M increase (\$285,900 Year 1, \$713,300 Year 2), which helped. But we still require the additional \$5M to reach the \$6M requested.

Wisconsin's 2009-11 Budget included the implementation of a state-wide transportation manager (or Transportation Broker) for Medicaid funded transportation services. We need to make sure that the Broker is not able to reduce services by making it more difficult to schedule rides. There is also concern that the Broker may have a negative impact on the Volunteer Driver Programs, which provide significant numbers of long-distance rides at very low cost to Medicaid in rural areas.

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