

## **Legislative Position**

### **Request for Funding for New Mobility Center for Lake County Public Transportation**

#### **Position**

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners is requesting funding of \$8 million to provide for a state of the art transit Mobility Center.

#### **Background/Justification**

Lake County Public Transportation Division started fixed route transportation services on May 21, 2007 the urbanized areas of the County. We are also contracting for transportation services from the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (Lynx) in the South end of the County.

With the population of Lake County exceeding 280,000 residents the demand for transportation services are increasing. In order to help to meet this growing demand it is essential that a transit mobility center be constructed to better serve the citizens of Lake County and the region.

Currently we are a full brokerage system and our provider operates out of a leased space which is not conducive to meeting the operational needs of our transit program. This problem has been intensified since we started fixed route service. The existing facility does not have ample space to adequately store the vehicles, perform the necessary maintenance, to have a bus wash and for the storage of supplies. Also there is not adequate office space available.

The proposed facility would serve as the transit operations center, it would provide offices and meeting rooms for Community Services and the MPO staff, operations, dispatch centers for fixed route and paratransit services, as well as vehicle maintenance and storage facilities.

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners has County owned property that is ideally located in the central part of the County that would be conducive to construct this facility in conjunction with other capital facilities that are being constructed on the site.

#### **Appropriation Amount**

The local appropriation request is \$8,000,000 for the initial engineering, design, site development, permitting and construction costs.

#### **Appropriation Amount**

The local appropriation request would be a ten percent match of \$800,000 which we would offset with the value of the land. The total appropriation request for the projects is \$8,000,000.

#### **Staff Contact**

Kenneth Harley, Public Transportation Manager  
Lake County Department of Community Services  
Public Transportation Division  
Phone: (352) 742-6581  
Email: [Kharley@lakecountyfl.gov](mailto:Kharley@lakecountyfl.gov)

## **Legislative Position**

### **Funding for the Transportation Disadvantaged Program**

#### **Position**

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners wishes to thank the Florida Legislature for their continuous financial support for the Transportation Disadvantaged Program administered through the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged.

#### **Background/Justification**

The Transportation Disadvantaged Program was established by the Legislature in 1979 and enhanced in 1989 with the creation of the independent Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, as well as the creation of a dedicated funding source. The Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund is administered by Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) and is housed within the Florida Department of Transportation.

The purpose of the program is to ensure the statewide availability of efficient, cost-effective, and quality transportation services for transportation disadvantaged persons. Through coordination of multiple funding sources at the local level, limited funds are maximized to provide citizen transportation.

Florida's seniors, disabled, low income, and children at risk who have no other form of transportation depend on the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund to assist them with daily transportation needs. Transportation is provided for such purposes as doctors or other medical services, grocery shopping or other nutritional activities, employment, job training, educational purposes or to obtain other essential services of daily living that are not sponsored by any other funding source.

The Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund is funded at approximately \$38 million per year and provided trips to Florida's most vulnerable populations when no other funding sources are available. With more and more of Florida's population becoming eligible for the transportation disadvantaged program additional funding is needed to continue to provide services throughout the state and in Lake County.

According to statistics from the CTD in 2005-06 there were over 829,183 trips statewide that were denied as a result of a lacking of funding. In Lake County we increased funding to the program by over \$400,000 in order that we would deny any of residents trips during the 2006-07 reporting period. The BCC was concerned about our citizens missing important medical and life-sustaining services and therefore added more dollars to help meet the needs. The County's contribution is over \$2,300,000. The 829,183 trip denials are conservative data and it does not reflect those denials that are not being documented because residents are not aware that the service exists, or the denials that occur for individuals needing evening and weekend services.

This year with property tax reforms and reduction in funding under the Medicaid Program we will not be in a position to provide every trip request so we will have trip denials.

**Appropriation Amount**

The Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged current year budget is \$38million. The funding is dispersed among the 67 counties based upon the formula contained in the Statute. Of the total funds 97% are used to fund the grant program and the Commission uses 3% for the operational costs.

**Fiscal Impact**

The current statewide fiscal impact is \$38 million. Lake County share is currently \$505,800. We are requesting that the Legislature keep the funding for this program intact for the 2008-09 fiscal year.

**Staff Contact**

Kenneth Harley, Public Transportation Manager  
Lake County Department of Community Services  
Public Transportation Division  
Phone: (352) 742-6581  
Email: [kharley@lakecountyfl.gov](mailto:kharley@lakecountyfl.gov)

**Legislative Position**

**Amend Chapter 427 to provide enforcement language**

**Position**

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners respectfully request that the Florida Legislature consider amending Chapter 427 to add enforcement language for agencies that operate outside the scope of Chapter 427. We would also like to see the language require that all entities that provide services for the transportation disadvantaged population to meet the requirements of Chapter 14-90.

**Background/Justification**

The Florida Legislature created the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD), promulgated by Chapter 427, F.S, as the state agency to coordinate human services transportation on a statewide basis. The CTD primary purpose is, to ensure the availability of efficient, cost-effective and quality transportation services to the transportation disadvantaged citizens.

The CTD coordinates transportation services for the elderly, disabled, low income, children-at-risk, or others who cannot obtain or purchase their own transportation to medical appointments, work, education, or other life-sustaining activities. Through coordination of multiple funding sources at the local level, limited funds are maximized to provide citizen transportation.

After the Agency for Health Care Administration (ACHA) entered into an agreement with the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) giving them administrative and management oversight of the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation Program, ACHA decided to allow Managed Care Organizations (MCO's) to become vendors in the program. These Managed Care Organizations provide transportation services through their own separate networks of transportation providers outside the coordinated transportation system created by Chapter 427, Part I, Florida Statutes (*F.S.*).

The Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) is the state agency organized under Chapter 427, *F.S.*, to coordinate transportation services, including Medicaid reimbursable transportation services, to those persons who are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation.

This action will lead to a duplication and fragmentation of services. This change has also created an unfunded mandate on our county governments. For instance ACHA reduced our funding from \$1,015,392 a year to \$576,545. The rationale behind these cuts is that ACHA is allegedly transferring 9,865 of our clients from the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation Program starting September 1, and 5766 December 31, 2007 to the MCO's. However, our statistics have not shown a decrease in trips during the first three weeks of September to correspond to the reduction.

In comparing August to September trips there has not been a reduction of service.

Aug 13-17	638	Sept 3-7	544 Actual	*670 Estimated
Aug 20-24	623	Sept 10-14	625	
Aug 25-31	620	Sept 17-21	624	

\*There was a holiday during the first week of September and as a result we estimated what the number would have been.

Studies have shown that the coordinated system saves tax dollars. In October 2003, AHCA contracted with the University of Florida, Bureau of Economic and Business Research to determine whether the program implemented by the CTD and its network of Community Transportation Coordinators (CTC's) has produced cost savings to Medicaid. The study conducted three different cost effectiveness measurements, and determined that all three showed "*significant savings*" of up to \$41 million per year to the Medicaid Program due to its utilization of the coordinated system.

It also appears that the Medicaid MCO's are exempt from the requirements of Chapter 427, F.S., and oversight by the Local Coordinating Boards (LCB's) or Community Transportation Coordinators (CTC's). This again takes away home rule authority from local government to monitor these agencies and to ensure that they meet the safety requirements that every participant in the coordinated system has to meet.

Florida Association Coordinated Transportation Systems (FACTS) has filed a lawsuit against AHCA seeking a declaratory judgment. FACTS believe AHCA has violated Chapter 427 in deciding to use HMOs for NET without following procedures prescribed under the laws of Florida.

It appears that if Florida wants to continue to be the national leader and model in coordinated transportation services that Chapter 427 needs to be amended to add enforcement language for the agencies that operate outside of the requirements of the law.

It also needs to be amended to mandate that all entities that receive transportation disadvantaged funds and provide services for the transportation disadvantaged population have to meet the minimum safety requirements outlined under Chapter 14-90.

### **Appropriation Amount**

There is no appropriation amount necessary to implement these changes.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The fiscal impact is that it will eventually cost local and state governments more to provide these services because the strength of the coordinated system is being destroyed. The savings that were identified by the study done by the University of Florida, Bureau of Economic and Business Research will be lost. Also the costs of services will increase for the counties impacted by not having a coordinated system in place.

### **Staff Contact**

Kenneth Harley, Public Transportation Manager  
Lake County Department of Community Services  
Public Transportation Division  
Phone: (352) 742-6581  
Email: [kharley@lakecountyfl.gov](mailto:kharley@lakecountyfl.gov)

## Legislative Position

### **Funding for the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation Program**

#### **Position**

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners would like to request that the Legislative Delegation support an effort to keep the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation Program (Medicaid NET) under the Medicaid Non-Emergency Program at \$73,000,000 a year and continue to allow the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged to administer the program.

#### **Background/Justification**

On June 11, 2004 the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) and the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) entered into an agreement giving the CTD administrative and management oversight of the Medicaid NET Program. The agreement gave the CTD authority to administer the \$73,200,447 ACHA had appropriated for the Medicaid NET Program, as well as the \$36,000,000 which they managed under the TD Program.

As a result of entering into the agreement the CTD would administer the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation Program similar to the Transportation Disadvantaged Program, which is currently operated in all 67 counties. This arrangement also gave the Community Transportation Coordinators more home rule authority over the program.

Lake County currently originally received \$84,616 per month for an annual allocation of \$1,015,392. However our funding was cut in on September 1, 2007 to 56,432 per month. It is to be cut again on January 1, 2008 to \$39,658.15 per month. As a result we will lose \$438,847 a year.

In making these cuts ACHA advised us that they were transferring 9,865 of our clients from the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation Program starting September 1, and 5766 December 31, 2007 to the MCO's. However, our statistics have not shown a decrease in trips during the first three weeks of September to correspond to the reduction.

In comparing August 2007 to September 2007 trips there has not been a reduction of trips for us.

Aug 13-17	638	Sept 3-7	544 Actual	*670 Estimated
Aug 20-24	623	Sept 10-14	625	
Aug 25-31	620	Sept 17-21	624	

\*There was a holiday during the first week of September and as a result we estimated what the number would have been.

In addition, the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged did a study of eleven (11) CTC's who's funding was reduced and found that there was a 6.9% reduction in funding and a 1.96% reduction in trip counts.

We are asking that the program at a minimum be restored to \$73,482,361 in funding and that the funds be appropriated to be used in the coordinated systems by the CTC's.

Also since Medicaid has now restored some services such as vision and dental back into the program we anticipate seeing a ten percent increase in trip requests so we would like to request that the Legislature consider an increase in the program.

**Appropriation Amount**

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners is requesting that statewide the program be funded at \$73,782,361 and that Lake County receive the \$1,015,392 it needs to adequately provide services to the Medicaid Non-Emergency clients of Lake County. It is requested that the funds be given to the CTC's in order to keep the coordinated system from being fragmented and their being duplications of services. ACHA already has the funding and we are requesting that those funds not be diverted to the Managed Care Organizations but given to the CTC's.

**Fiscal Impact**

The fiscal impact of the program is requested at \$73,482,361 at the state level and \$1,015,392 at the local level to keep the services in tact for the citizens who depend on this valuable and life-saving service. The funding already exists it is merely a matter of appropriating them to the CTD instead of the Managed Care Organizations.

**Staff Contact**

Kenneth Harley, Public Transportation Manager  
Lake County Department of Community Services  
Public Transportation Division  
Phone: (352) 742-6581  
Email: [kharley@lakecountyfl.gov](mailto:kharley@lakecountyfl.gov)