Transportation Options are the Key to Independence for People with Disabilities

Summary: Access to transportation and fully accessible communities consistently rank as the top needs of persons with disabilities in order to remain independent in the community. That is why Michigan’s Centers for Independent Living have supported strengthening and expanding public transportation and Complete Streets initiatives on the local and state levels. These investments ensure that persons with disabilities have the same opportunities to access employment, social, medical, spiritual, shopping, and recreational destinations. In short, investments in transportation support the potential for everyone to live a full life.

The Issue: Proposition 1 which was placed on the ballot by Governor Snyder and the Legislature was soundly defeated by Michigan voters. While so many complained about the complexity of the ballot question, the majority of Michigan residents reported that they want to improve our transportation system through increased funding and they want to do so without gutting other programs. All Michigan citizens, including those with disabilities, will be better off when a comprehensive transportation funding package is passed and implemented. This package must contain new revenue and fund all transportation options in an equitable manner.

The Solution: Be Innovative! Be Sufficient in Our Investment Levels! Be Equitable!

State Transportation Funding

- Michigan’s transportation funding levels have simply not kept pace with the needs of a vibrant economy and livable communities.
- In addition to the well-documented need to increase funding for Michigan’s roads and bridges, we must increase sustainable revenues for public transportation, passenger rail, intercity motor coach and bike and pedestrian (non-motorized) options.
- The State must also expand local and regional transportation revenue enhancing options beyond the currently available property tax option.
- Governor Snyder and legislative leaders need to gather as soon as possible to draft a funding proposal, the so-called Plan B, to replace the transportation funding that would have been available through Proposition 1.

Urban & Rural Planning

- Require local municipalities to incorporate the mobility needs of ALL people in their communities.
- Require municipalities to adopt Complete Street initiatives that look at ALL modes of transportation, not simply automobiles.

Closing: On behalf of Michigan’s citizens with disabilities and our aging population, Disability Network/Michigan is counting on Michigan’s policy-makers and voters to rise to the challenge of creating long-term, viable solutions to ensure community access. Investing in transportation is an investment into a stronger economic future and makes Michigan an attractive place to reside.