



MARYLAND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COALITION

Dedicated to the rights and quality of life for people with developmental disabilities in Maryland

SB331- Task Force to Study Paratransit in Maryland

Finance Committee

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Letter of Information



8601 Robert Fulton Dr
Suite 140
Columbia, MD 21046



1500 Union Avenue
Suite 2000
Baltimore, MD 21211



8835 Columbia 100 Pky
Suite P
Columbia, MD 21044



Maryland Developmental
Disabilities Council

217 E Redwood Street
Suite 1300
Baltimore, MD 21202



7000 Tudsbury Road
Windsor Mill, MD
21244

In 1997, the Governor formed the **State Coordinating Committee for Human Services Transportation** (Executive Order 01.01.1997.06). It was reconstituted in September 2006 and again in April 2010 (Executive Order 01.01.2006.09; Executive Order 01.01.2010.10). Subsequently, **in the 2023 Maryland Legislative Session, SB511 (CH331): Health and Human Services Transportation Improvement Act of 2023** passed, establishing the State Coordinating Committee for Health and Human Services Transportation.

The duties of the State Coordinating Committee for Health and Human Services Transportation are to examine the transportation needs of residents of the state who are elderly, have a disability, or require transportation to access jobs, medical and other health-related appointments, senior citizen programs, or other programs requiring the transportation of individuals who qualify as “transportation-disadvantaged.”

Specific responsibilities of the Committee include:

- (a) Coordinate efforts in the state to provide quality health and human services transportation services by working with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, transit consumers and transportation providers, to develop a cooperative and coordinated health and human services transportation system.
- (b) Conduct an inventory and assessment of health and human services transportation providers in the state.
- (c) Devise a 5-Year Health and Human Services Transportation Plan that sets goals and objectives to help transportation-disadvantaged residents of the state access jobs, education and training programs, healthcare services, and other activities by providing cost-effective, affordable, high-capacity, high-quality, easily understood, and safe and accessible transportation; and

(d) Serve as the clearinghouse for health and human services transportation coordination issues in the state, identify and facilitate resolution to issues regarding health and human services transportation, both locally and statewide, participate in the identification of potential allocations of health and human services transportation resources during emergency evacuations, evaluate cost-saving measures, investigate the need for the establishment of standards for vehicles and drivers within health and human services transportation programs, and examine other appropriate areas to facilitate the development of a quality health and human services transportation. The effective date of the Act was October 1, 2023.

Paratransit is an important part of the transportation system for adults with disabilities. It can be presumed that a responsibility, of the State Coordinating Committee for Health and Human Services Transportation, is to review the efficacy, safety, affordability, and accessibility of Paratransit services. Therefore, SB331 may not be necessary.

In the **State Coordinating Committee for Health and Human Services Transportation (established)** and in a new **Task Force to Study Paratransit in Maryland** (if passed), there should be meaningful involvement and input from people who have a lived experience with Paratransit, including members with developmental disabilities. Should SB331 advance, we recommend Task Force membership be amended to include **people with developmental disabilities who use Paratransit services in Maryland.**

For more information, please contact a member of the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Coalition.