



County of Lackawanna

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Resolution: 19-0098

Lackawanna County
Government Center
at The Globe
123 Wyoming Ave
Scranton, Pennsylvania
18503

File Number: 19-0098

Opposing Changes to the Medical Assistance Transportation Program

WHEREAS, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates that in any area where fixed-bus route service is offered, door-to-door service to the elderly, the disabled and other people who cannot use or access the regular bus service must also be offered and most counties in Pennsylvania are responsible for the coordination of these paratransit services, which they either provide directly, as the County of Lackawanna Transit System (COLTS) does, or through a subcontractor; and

WHEREAS, MATP provides needed transportation to the most vulnerable members of our community which includes free trips to non-emergency medical appointments for individuals who qualify for Medical Transportation Assistance, seniors and persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, on June 22, 2018, the State Legislature, in the final hours of the passage of the state budget, adopted language into the Human Services Fiscal Code (HB 1677) directing the Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide the Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) through a statewide or regional full-risk brokerage system and the measure was approved by the Governor the same day; and

WHEREAS, the original incentive for implementing a full-risk brokerage was the promise of additional federal funding for DHS of \$15 million statewide, however, additional analysis now shows the estimated cost to the Commonwealth will be significantly higher, resulting in zero savings realized, and significant additional financial burden placed on PA taxpayers through other funding mechanisms that are

already oversubscribed, and adding additional layers to the delivery of MATP services, and across the state, MATP funding exceeds 30% of the shared ride/paratransit programs; and

WHEREAS, currently, Pennsylvania functions under a “coordinated system” which is a national model of efficiency and is illustrated in a recent Transportation Research Board report which shows our state’s shared ride model is the third-lowest MATP cost nationally; and

WHEREAS, brokering MATP service will result in many MATP trips being removed from that coordinated system which will increase costs overall, reduce coordination which will result in a significant loss in service productivity and reduce the geographic service area and hours of service, meaning seniors and persons with disabilities will see a reduction in available service; and

WHEREAS, in Pennsylvania, DHS primarily contracts with counties who are responsible for managing MATP and delivering service to eligible persons either directly or through subcontractors; and most Counties use Pennsylvania’s public shared-ride transportation systems to manage and deliver this service; and

WHEREAS, the move to a brokered MATP service would take away local management over MATP and transfer jobs and funding to agencies outside of the Counties where the services are being provided thereby potentially turning the funding over to large statewide or even international corporations which have little interest in local concerns: and

WHEREAS, independent research indicates that removing MATP from the coordinated model will very likely result in the need to increase revenue from the remaining funding sources, including the MATP program, by increasing the Cost to The Commonwealth by an estimated 23% or \$31.5 Million, and under the worst-case scenario where local transit providers would lose all MATP trips, the Commonwealth would experience a \$63.8 million increase in costs; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners do hereby oppose the changes being made to the Medical Assistance Transportation Program involving a transition to a statewide or regional full-risk brokerage system by the State Legislature and the Department of Human Services;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners will submit this resolution to the regional legislative Representatives and State Senators, and provide copies to the state Department of Humans Services and the Governor office in an effort to respectfully request the Administration and General Assembly take steps to suspend the award of the RFA and consider taking action to study this issue further before initiating any changes.

ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Lackawanna County held on May 1, 2019.

COUNTY OF LACKAWANNA



PATRICK M. O'MALLEY



LAUREEN A. CUMMINGS



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ATTEST:



FRANCESCA M. PANTUSO
CHIEF OF STAFF

Approved as to form and legality:



JOHN J. BRAZIL, JR.
COUNTY SOLICITOR