



COUNTY OF POLK

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November 4, 2008

Senator Matt McCoy
Co-Chair Mass Transit Study Committee
Senate District 31
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Senator McCoy:

On behalf of Polk County I want to thank you for taking the time to chair this important Mass Transit Study Committee because we strongly believe that public transit is an essential element to the future quality of life in the Des Moines metropolitan region. We demonstrate this support with our proud participation in the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART), whereby all of our citizens enjoy access to multiple transit options throughout the region. Polk County believes strongly in helping our citizens save on transportation costs and enjoy stress free commuting, but our participation in DART also helps our county:

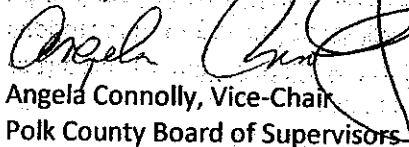
- Support strong economic development with a sound alternative transportation system while alleviating the need for more expensive parking;
- meet our own, as well as the region's sustainable "green" goals; and
- increase access for our residents with limited mobility.

Maintaining the economic vitality and rich quality of life in the Des Moines metropolitan region is a top priority of Polk County, both of which are strongly reliant on our nationally-leading, 19-minute commute time. We know we must support new investment in alternative transportation modes, like public transit, to maintain this competitiveness:

- Even though significant improvements were recently completed to the I-235 corridor, it is already experiencing rush-hour congestion.
- The recent spike in gas prices has economically challenged all levels of our community.

Our citizens are responding to these challenges by riding the bus more than ever before. We strongly encourage the Committee's work to identify additional resources and improved state support for public transit in Des Moines and throughout Iowa.

Sincerely,


Angela Connolly, Vice-Chair
Polk County Board of Supervisors

Principal

**Financial
Group**

**Principal Life
Insurance Company**

November 14, 2008

Senator Matt McCoy
Senate District 31
Democrat
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA
50319

and

Representative Beth Wessel-Kroeschell
House District 45
Democrat
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

To the Co-Chairs of the Iowa Legislature's Mass Transit Study Committee:

On behalf of The Principal Financial Group I want to thank you for taking the time to chair this important Mass Transit Study Committee because we strongly believe that public transit is an essential element to the future quality of life in the Des Moines metropolitan region. We demonstrate this support with our proud participation in the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority's (DART) "Unlimited Access" program whereby all 7,500 employees can ride any DART bus services for free just by showing their identification badges. This program not only benefits our employees, who save on commuting costs and enjoy stress free commutes, but it helps us:

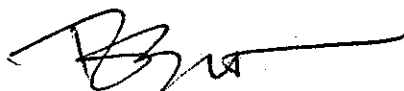
- manage costly parking requirements;
- meet our own goals, as well as the region's sustainable "green" goals; and
- provide fantastic assistance to support our most important assets: our employees.

Maintaining the economic vitality and rich quality of life in the Des Moines region, both of which are strongly reliant on our nationally-leading 19-minute average commuting time, is critical to the future success of The Principal Financial Group. We know we must support new investment in alternative transportation modes, like public transit, to maintain this competitiveness:

- The significant improvements recently completed to the I-235 corridor have not put a stop to rush hour congestion.
- The recent spike in gas prices has economically challenged all levels of our workforce.

Our employees are responding to these challenges by riding the bus more than ever before. We strongly encourage the Committee's work to identify additional resources and improved state support to help make public transit in Des Moines and throughout Iowa even better.

Sincerely,



Ted Brackett
Assistant Vice President – Corporate Real Estate

cc Merle Pederson

ALTOONA

November 3, 2008

Senator Matt McCoy
Senate District 31
Democrat
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

Representative Beth Wessel-Kroeschell
House District 45
Democrat
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

To the Co-Chairs of the Iowa Legislature's Mass Transit Study Committee:

On behalf of the City of Altoona I want to thank you for taking the time to chair this important Mass Transit Study Committee because we strongly believe that public transit is an essential element to the future quality of life in the Des Moines metropolitan region. We demonstrate this support with our proud participation in the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART), whereby all of our citizens enjoy access to multiple transit options throughout the region. The City of Altoona believes strongly in helping our citizens save on transportation costs and enjoy stress free commuting, but our participation in DART also helps our city:

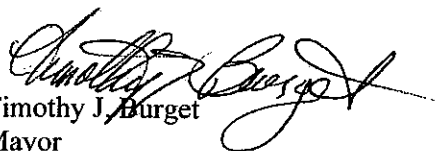
- Support strong economic development with a sound alternative transportation system while alleviating the need for more expensive parking;
- meet our own, as well as the region's sustainable "green" goals; and
- increase access for our residents with limited mobility.

Maintaining the economic vitality and rich quality of life in the Des Moines metropolitan region is a top priority of Altoona, both of which are strongly reliant on our nationally-leading, 19-minute commute time. We know we must support new investment in alternative transportation modes, like public transit, to maintain this competitiveness:

- Even though significant improvements were recently completed to the I-235 corridor, it is already experiencing rush-hour congestion.
- The recent spike in gas prices has economically challenged all levels of our community.

Our citizens are responding to these challenges by riding the bus more than ever before. We strongly encourage the Committee's work to identify additional resources and improved state support for public transit in Des Moines and throughout Iowa.

Sincerely,


Timothy J. Burget
Mayor



October 31, 2008

Mayor T. M. Franklin Cownie

Senator Matt McCoy
Senate District 31
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

and

Representative Beth Wessel-Kroeschell
House District 45
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

To the Co-Chairs of the Iowa Legislature's Mass Transit Study Committee:

On behalf of the City of Des Moines, I want to thank you for taking the time to chair this important Mass Transit Study Committee because we strongly believe that public transit is an essential element to the future quality of life in the Des Moines metropolitan region. We demonstrate this support with our participation in the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART), whereby all of our citizens enjoy access to multiple transit options throughout the region. The City of Des Moines believes strongly in helping our citizens save on transportation costs and enjoy stress free commuting, but our participation in DART also helps our city:


- support strong economic development with a sound alternative transportation system while alleviating the need for more expensive parking;
- meet our own, as well as the region's sustainable "green" goals; and
- increase access for our residents with limited mobility.


Maintaining the economic vitality and rich quality of life in the Des Moines metropolitan region is a top priority of Des Moines, both of which are strongly reliant on our nationally-leading, 19-minute commute time. We know we must support new investment in alternative transportation modes, like public transit, to maintain this competitiveness:

- Even though significant improvements were recently completed to the I-235 corridor, it is already experiencing rush-hour congestion.
- The recent spike in gas prices has economically challenged all levels of our community.

Our citizens are responding to these challenges by riding the bus more than ever before. We strongly encourage the Committee's work to identify additional resources and improved state support for public transit in Des Moines and throughout Iowa.

Sincerely,


T. M. Franklin Cownie
Mayor


Richard A. Clark
City Manager

ALL-AMERICA CITY
1949, 1976, 1981
2003

City Hall

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IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Office of the Vice President
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1350 Beardshear Hall
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October 27, 2008

Honorable Beth Wessel-Kroeschell
State Representative
State Capitol Building
E. 12th & Grand
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Re: Public Transit Impact

Dear Representative Wessel-Kroeschell:

As you and Senator Matt McCoy meet to discuss public transportation as a part of the Mass Transit Study, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your foresight in addressing the issues facing public transit today. Specifically, I would like to offer my perspective on the issues, concerns and challenges facing the Ames Transit Agency (CyRide), which include: record ridership, skyrocketing fuel prices and constraints on local government and student funding mechanisms. As we look toward the future in Iowa, we need to create a vision for public transit and funding mechanisms. Meeting residents' energy, economic and mobility needs in our state is a basic obligation that will require a strong partnership with the state.

Over the last three years, CyRide has experienced ridership increases between 3-12% annually. We are seeing more residents and students turn toward transit as their best option to move throughout the community with gas prices continuing to take a large piece of individual's discretionary income. We are fortunate in Ames to have a strong public transit system, but are finding it difficult to maintain our existing levels of service, while at the same time meet the challenges created by additional ridership. CyRide is facing a budget deficit this year. This deficit was created by much higher than anticipated fuel costs and the need for additional services to meet the increased number of riders.

In the next budget year, our local funding partners are facing an 8% increase in costs just to maintain existing service levels. With additional ridership and growth at the university and within the city, we need to expand our services. However, in these economic times, we are unable to identify funding levels that will support an 8% increase, let alone higher funding commitments to meet needs for more service. With state transit funding stabilizing over the past nine years, and the very real possibility of decreased funding this year, transit agencies will be faced with very difficult choices to balance their budgets.

Honorable Beth Wessel-Kroeschell
October 27, 2008
Page 2

The State of Iowa needs to strongly consider alternate funding mechanisms in the next session of the Legislature that will allow operating assistance from state transit funding to substantially grow over the next 10 - 20 years while at the same time assist with much-needed capital expenditures for bus replacement. Public transit in Ames, and throughout the state, is reaching a critical point where it will be facing service cutbacks and fare increases. If this situation continues, the State of Iowa will not be meeting its commitment to Iowans in meeting their most basic mobility needs.

Sincerely,

Warren R. Madden
Vice President for Business and Finance

cc: Andrew Baumert
✓ Senator Matt McCoy

WRM:00502008



STATE OF IOWA

CHESTER J. CULVER, GOVERNOR
PATTY JUDGE, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
EUGENE I. GESSOW, DIRECTOR

November 4, 2008

The Honorable Matt McCoy
State Senator
110 35th Street
Des Moines, IA 50312

Dear Senator McCoy:

This is in response to your request for information regarding mass transit options the Department of Human Services (DHS) may reimburse for members and whether the DHS provides any funding to Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART).

The DHS does not provide any funding to the DART. The PROMISE JOBS program provides job training programs and educational opportunities to Family Investment Program (FIP) participants. Each PROMISE JOBS participant develops a Family Investment Agreement that outlines the work and educational activities in which the person will participate. A participant may be compensated for transportation costs for each day of participation, if transportation is required, for most PROMISE JOBS activities. Transportation costs are not paid for employment due to the fact that employed participants are entitled to the Family Investment Program (FIP) work expense deduction. For those participants that use public transportation, the allowance is based on the rate schedules of the local transit authority.

The PROMISE JOBS participants are low-income families. They may not have driver's licenses or reliable vehicles and may rely on mass transit. This is a particular problem in rural areas where public transportation is unavailable.

Iowa Medicaid reimburses Medicaid eligible recipients for their transportation expenditures in two different ways that are either through the non-emergency medical transportation or through Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) waivers. The following bullets describe the non-emergency medical transportation program and its usage:

- Transportation is reimbursed to receive medical care services covered under the Medicaid program, including transportation to obtain prescribed drugs.
- Transportation costs are reimbursable only when:
 - The source of the care is located outside the city limits of the community in which the member resides; or
 - The member resides in a rural area and must travel to a city to receive necessary care.
 - Transportation costs are reimbursable only when there is no resource available to the member through which necessary transportation might be secured free of charge.

- Transportation may be of any type such as public transit or individuals and may be provided from any source.
- When public transportation is utilized, the basis of payment will be the actual charge made by the provider of transportation, not to exceed the charge that would be made by the most economical available source of public transportation.
- In the case of a child too young to travel alone, or an adult or child who because of physical or mental incapacity is unable to travel alone, payment subject to the above conditions shall be made for the transportation costs of an escort.
- When meals and lodging or other travel expenses are required in connection with transportation, payment will be subject to the same conditions as for a state employee and the maximum amount payable shall not exceed the maximum payable to a state employee for the same expenses in connection with official travel within the state of Iowa.
- The number of unduplicated Medicaid members served using 2008 data (January through August) is 19,323.
- The average claim amount is \$84.65 (Also based on January through August 2008)
- SFY 2008 Medical Transportation Expenditures
Total Dollars: \$6,686,259
State Dollars: \$3,386,473

Under the Brain Injury, Elderly, and Mental Retardation (MR) HCBS waivers transportation is offered to eligible Medicaid members to conduct business errands and essential shopping, to receive medical services when not reimbursed through medical transportation, to travel to and from work or day programs, and to reduce social isolation.

The DHS is working in coordination with the Department of Transportation (DOT), University of Iowa's Center for Disabilities and Development (CDD), and the University of Iowa's Public Policy Center (PPC) to develop a statewide transportation brokerage system. Sec. 6083 of the Federal Deficit Reduction Act provided states with additional State Plan flexibility to establish a non-emergency, medical transportation brokerage program, and to receive the Federal medical assistance percentage rate. With grant funds through the Real Choices Grant, a study has been completed that researched the following:

- The assessment of Medicaid transportation needs
- Inventoried the available transportation services
- Gap Analysis
- Specified the functional requirements for a transportation brokerage service.

Under a brokerage program, rather than reimbursing Medicaid members for transporting themselves and/or reimbursing providers for transporting individuals, which places the bulk of the responsibility on consumers, DHS Income Maintenance workers and case managers, the IME would contract with an entity expected to:

- (1) Establish a network of transportation providers
- (2) Maintain a call center
- (3) Ensure compliance with Medicaid regulations related to eligibility of the individual and trip
- (4) Arrange and pay for the trips
- (5) Monitor services and transportation providers for compliance and quality.

States that have established brokerage programs have, in general, experienced an increase in the number of trips and a reduction in the cost per trip. The brokerage concept has been actively supported at the federal level for both Medicaid and the general population. The project will need the Legislatures approval to continue with this project under Medicaid. We anticipate there will be an increase in Medicaid Transportation usage with the brokerage system. We cannot determine a firm fiscal impact. The yearly projection for transportation costs across HCBS waivers and Non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) with an allowance for 10% or 20% increase with the use of a brokerage system.

Program	2008 Calendar yearly costs projected	Costs with 10% increase	Costs with 20% increase
Medical Transportation	\$8,626,871	\$9,489,558	\$10,352,246
HCSB Waivers	\$6,617,073	\$7,278,780	\$7,940,488
Totals (State and Federal)	\$15,243,945	\$16,768,339	\$18,292,734

If expenditures increase by 10%, the state fiscal impact would be approximately \$945,000. We believe it may increase by more than that over a multi-year time frame. There may not be an increase over time with the use of a brokerage system. Other states have seen savings with the use of a brokerage program due to better coordination of transportation, decrease in fraud, and improved overall health of the members. Medicaid programs with brokerages indicate that the key to success of the NEMT program is a wide network of transportation providers. This fee structure can also lead to cost savings for Medicaid when operation costs decrease because the savings are passed back to Medicaid.

Senator Matt McCoy

Page 4

While the DHS would not have figures on green house gases or air quality, it would make sense that better coordination of transportation would result in less fuel usage and better air quality.

For questions regarding this information please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Molly Kottmeyer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M".

Molly Kottmeyer
Legislative Liaison

MK/ss

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State Senator
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Honorable Matt McCoy
October 27, 2008
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Sincerely,



Warren R. Madden
Vice President for Business and Finance

cc: Andrew Baumert
Representative Beth Wessel-Kroeschell

WRM:00502008