



**volunteer driver**  
COALITION

March 15, 2021

Representative Hornstein, Chair  
House Transportation Finance and Policy Committee

**RE: House File 586 – Volunteer Driver Definition**

Dear Chair Hornstein and Members of the Committee:

As the co-chairs of the Volunteer Driver Coalition, we write to urge passage of House File 586 (Murphy). Without changing current law, some insurance companies will continue to treat volunteer drivers as commercial drivers-for-hire. When this happens, volunteers are charged higher vehicle insurance rates for the sole reason that they are a volunteer driver. As a result, it is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit and retain volunteers.

This bill will protect and strengthen volunteer driver programs and help to ensure that volunteers can continue to transport older adults and people with disabilities to medical appointments and community services across Minnesota. In the most recent survey of the Volunteer Driver Coalition, nonprofit and local government programs reported providing more than **168,000 trips annually, serving 77,000 people.**

Volunteer drivers contribute their time and use their own vehicles to provide rides. The organizations that sponsor them require that their volunteers are trained to provide safe rides in safe vehicles. Volunteers help frail older adults and others who have functional or cognitive limitations by providing door-through-door access to medical care and to community supports and services.

As the older population continues to grow – at an unprecedented pace, volunteer driver programs must be viable and thrive for the essential role they play in access to healthcare and to the broader community. These programs help to ensure equitable access to medical care, reduce isolation and provide safe rides. In some communities in greater Minnesota, these programs are the only option for transportation services.

Thank you for your consideration. For more information, contact Sherry Munyon at 612-723-4245 or [smunyon@capitolaccess.us](mailto:smunyon@capitolaccess.us).

Sincerely,

Sherry Munyon, Co-Chair, Volunteer Driver Coalition  
MN Public Transit Association/Capitol Access

Dawn Simonson, Co-chair, Volunteer Driver Coalition  
Executive Director, Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging

Mary Quirk, Co-Chair, Volunteer Driver Coalition  
Executive Director, Living at Home Network

Lori Vrolson, Co-chair, Volunteer Driver Coalition  
Immediate Past Chair  
Minnesota Association of Area Agencies on Aging

## About the Coalition

The Volunteer Driver Coalition came together in 2019 with leadership from the Minnesota Public Transit Association and support from the Minnesota Association of Area Agencies on Aging and the Living at Home Network. Members include nonprofit organizations, counties, Area Agencies on Aging, Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils, associations, and others that support the Coalition's advocacy initiative to strengthen volunteer driver programs in Minnesota.

## Coalition Members

AARP Minnesota  
 Age Well Arrowhead  
 Aitkin County CARE, Inc.  
 Amherst H. Wilder Foundation  
 Anoka County Community Action Program  
 Anoka County Medlink  
 Anoka County RSVP  
 ARDC/Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging  
 Argyle Hope Program  
 Arrowhead Transit-Volunteer Driving Program  
 Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC)  
 Big Woods Transit/Bois Forte Band of Chippewa  
 B's Homecare Inc. & B's Adult Day Center  
 CARE - Community Action Respecting Elders  
 Care Partners of Cook County  
 Carver County  
 Center for Victims of Torture  
 Central Community Transit  
 Central MN Council on Aging  
 City of Sandstone  
 Community Partners  
 Como Park/Falcon Heights Living at Home Block Nurse Program  
 Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging  
 DARTS  
 East Central Regional Development Commission/East Central Regional Transportation Coordinating Council  
 East Side Elders  
 Faith in Action for Cass County  
 GoDakota  
 Hamline Midway Elders  
 Hastings Family Service

Headwaters RTCC  
 Help At Your Door  
 Hennepin County  
 Highland Block Nurse Program  
 Horizon Health  
 Keystone Community Services  
 Living at Home Network  
 Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors  
 Metro Meals on Wheels  
 Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging  
 Mid-Minnesota Development Commission  
 Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration  
 Minnesota Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
 Minnesota Association of Townships  
 Minnesota Community Action Partnership  
 Minnesota Council of Nonprofits  
 Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging  
 Minnesota Public Transit Association  
 Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging  
 Minnesota Social Service Association  
 Neighborhood Network for Seniors  
 Neighbors, Inc.  
 North End -South Como Block Nurse Program  
 North Shore Area Partners  
 Northeast MN Regional Transportation Coordination Council  
 Northwest Regional Development Commission  
 Northwoods Caregivers  
 Paynesville Area LAH/BNP aka R.O.S.E. Center  
 Prairie Five C.A.C., Inc.

Productive Alternatives Volunteer Driver Program  
 Rainbow Rider  
 Region Five RTCC  
 Roseville Area Senior Program  
 Scott County - Smartlink  
 Semcac  
 Senior Services Consortium of Ramsey County  
 Seven County Senior Federation  
 Southeast Seniors  
 Southeastern Minnesota Area Agency on Aging  
 The Nokomis Healthy Seniors Group  
 St. Anthony Park Area Seniors  
 Stephen Living at Home/Block Nurse Program  
 Three Rivers Community Action  
 Tri-County Action Program  
 Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.  
 United Community Action Partnership  
 Volunteer Services of Carlton County, Inc.  
 Volunteers of America - MN Our Home  
 Warren S.O.S.  
 WeCAB  
 West Central MN Communities Action, Inc.  
 Wright County Community Action