

“Support Community and Public Transportation”



Ask: Support HB 26: *"An Act relating to the duties of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities; and relating to a statewide public and community transit plan"*.

Why: Accessible, affordable transportation is essential for the employment, healthcare access, and community participation of Alaskans with disabilities, seniors, Alaska Mental Health Trust beneficiaries, youth, and low-income residents.

- Many communities still lack public or nonprofit transit systems, leaving vulnerable populations without transportation options.
- Transportation consistently ranks among the top needs in surveys of seniors and people with disabilities.
- Alaska's community transportation system relies heavily on federal grants, fare collections, and local government support. However, rising fuel costs and growing demand have placed unprecedented financial pressure on transit systems, leading to service cuts and fare increases that disproportionately affect low-income riders.
- The DOT&PF currently has no statutory mandate to prioritize public and community transportation. HB 26 would require the DOT&PF to develop a statewide public and community transit plan with local input from public, tribal, and nonprofit transit providers.
- This legislation ensures that community transportation becomes a core responsibility of the department, protecting federal funding, promoting equitable access, and reducing the risk of Title VI violations.

HB 26 Passed the House in 2025 and is now in Senate CRA Committee