

Committee on Transportation

CS/CS/SB 1380 — Transportation Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Transportation Disadvantaged

by Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services; Transportation Committee; and Senator Hutson

The bill revises numerous provisions relating to special transportation services for persons with disabilities and the transportation disadvantaged. Specifically, the bill:

- Requires the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), unless otherwise provided by state or federal law, to ensure that grants and agreements between it and paratransit providers contain:
 - Performance requirements for the delivery of services, including penalties for repeated or continuing violations;
 - Minimum liability insurance requirements for all transportation services purchased, provided, or coordinated for the transportation disadvantaged through a contracted vendor or its subcontractor;
 - Complaint and grievance processes for paratransit users, including a requirement that all reported complaints, grievances, and resolutions be reported to FDOT; and
 - A requirement that the above provisions be included in any agreement between the grant recipient and its contractors or subcontractors providing paratransit service.
- Increases the membership of the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD), from seven to 11 members and revises the commission's membership.
- Repeals fingerprinting and background check requirements for CTD members.
- Repeals the CTD's technical working group.
- Provides requirements for contracts entered into or renewed after October 1, 2024, with providers of paratransit services. Providers must agree to:
 - Provide training to each driver which meets specified requirements established by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities.
 - Establish reasonable time periods between a request for service and the arrival of the provider, and in the event of a pattern of late arrivals, allow the local government to authorize another provider to provide such paratransit services.
 - Provide transparency regarding the quality of service provided by the transportation service provider, including data on the timeliness of service and the handling of complaints.
- Requires contracts entered into with providers after October 1, 2024, to be procured using competitive procurement and prohibits use of statutory provisions regarding exceptional purchases.
- Requires the CTD to establish a model system for reporting and investigating adverse incidents during the provision of paratransit service to persons with disabilities.
- Requires the investigation of a reported adverse incident to commence within 48 hours after receiving the report.
- Requires local governments or transportation service providers to submit quarterly reports of adverse incidents to the CTD.

- Requires the Center for Urban Transportation Research, by January 1, 2025, to deliver a report to FDOT on model policies and procedures or best practices for paratransit providers to complete trips within an acceptable time.
- Requires the Implementing Solutions from Transportation Research and Evaluating Emerging Technologies Living Lab, by January 1, 2025, to deliver a comprehensive report on technology and training improvements to better support persons with disabilities using paratransit services.
- Requires FDOT, by January 1, 2025, to issue a comprehensive report on transportation disadvantaged services and the CTD. The report must include:
 - A review of the services rendered by transportation coordinators or transportation operators, specifically addressing specified issues;
 - A review of transportation delivery models, and a review of alternative models;
 - The role of paratransit services as used by providers of services to the transportation disadvantaged and the differences between paratransit services and the services provided by the CTD;
 - The role of health care transportation services as used by the transportation disadvantaged;
 - A breakdown of funding provided by CTD on a contractual level;
 - A review of eligibility criteria, including relevant demographic information;
 - A review of challenges and opportunities to better support rural counties administering such programs;
 - Recommendations on efficiencies and challenges from adopting an alternative format of delivering services;
 - Best practices for limiting the duration of travel times for persons receiving paratransit service; and
 - A review of emerging and other technology opportunities for the provision of services.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming a law.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 115-0