

June 10, 2021

For Immediate Release

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Survival Coalition concerned impact of Public Transit cuts on people with disabilities and direct care workforce

Tuesday the Joint Finance Committee made significant cuts to Mass Transit Operating Assistance which will impact the Milwaukee and Madison public transit systems this biennium and beyond. The motion the committee approved cuts funding from the amount budgeted two years ago.

Public transit is an essential service that essential workers relied on throughout the pandemic. The pandemic created unprecedented strain on transit systems, and as Wisconsin returns to work and public life it is critical these transit systems are maintained.

Survival Coalition is concerned the proposed budget cuts will put additional strain on already strained systems that serve many people with disabilities, older adults, low-income workers and direct service professionals. These cuts may result in elimination of routes, longer waits, increased fares and other changes that disproportionately impact non-drivers.

Reductions to transit will cause long term consequences for people with disabilities and older adults who rely on it to access to independence, employment, health care, and all the supports they need for a life in the community. For many public transit is the primary mode of transportation used; changes to schedules, routes, or fares have a profound impact on where people can go.

Additionally, many Direct Service Professionals in the caregiving workforce rely on public transit to commute to and between client homes. Reductions in transit service can put some clients' homes out of many workers reach, dramatically increase the time it takes to get to client homes and disrupt the ability to schedule routine personal cares especially in evening and on weekends.