

SB20-151: The Accountability, Democracy, and Accessibility in Public Transit (ADAPT) Act Concerning the Administration of the Regional Transportation District

Sens. Tate and Rodriguez; Reps. Jackson and Larson

YES on SB-151 is a vote for riders and taxpayers

- Increases fiscal and performance oversight of the Regional Transportation District;
- Improves coordination with CDOT and municipalities in RTD's transportation planning;
- Requires RTD to comply with the same ethics rules as state and local governments;
- Directs the State Auditor to perform essential audits of the District's overhead costs;
- Removes government red tape to optimize revenue and ridership;
- Ensures that RTD is complying with federal antidiscrimination law; and
- Identifies measures to improve the quality of service for Coloradans with disabilities.

SB-151 is a bipartisan, common-sense bill that will provide better oversight of the Regional Transportation District.

COLORADANS WHO MADE HISTORY In 1978, a group of organizers with disabilities generated national attention when they protested RTD on the corner of Broadway and Colfax over its refusal to make their bus fleet wheelchair-accessible. By 1985, RTD made all of its local routes wheelchair-accessible. The transit accessibility movement helped pave the way for the bipartisan Americans with Disabilities Act, which was signed by President George H.W. Bush in 1990. Today, Title II of the ADA protects over a third of Coloradans from discrimination in public services. (Photo credit Rocky Mountain News. February 15, 1985)



Improving the fiscal health of the Regional Transportation District

- The state auditor will conduct three audits by 2022: an audit of the district's salaried pension plan, an audit on the District's organizational structure and size, and a cost efficiency and performance analysis of vehicular service policies to determine the cost savings and additional value in services to the district
- RTD must give the Board at least a 15-day notice with a request to amend the budget and a 30-day notice of an intent to borrow
- The TLRC and the Board shall have the authority to inspect RTD records
- An amendment will be introduced to increase transparency of how and when taxpayer dollars are spent (similar to the state TOPs system)

Good-government reforms and securing the public trust

- RTD shall live broadcast public meetings
- RTD must hold monthly meetings and directors must be physically present
- Whistleblower protections will be granted for employees
- RTD will be included to the state auditor's fraud tip line
- Members of the Board and staff will be subject to Article XXIX of the Colorado Constitution (Amendment 41) and the Independent Ethics Commission, as well as state conflict of interest laws
- RTD candidates will have contribution limits (RTD is the only statewide election with no limits)

Better services for riders and taxpayers

- RTD must consider a locality's need for transit services when making decisions. RTD must also consider antidiscrimination laws, pollution, fiscal health, and whether or not the proposals will actually improve the value of service.
- The bill repeals the farebox recovery ratio, but keeps the financial reporting requirement
- The public transit provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act will be incorporated in the RTD Act. A temporary ADA oversight sub-committee will be created under the Transportation Legislation Review Committee, with experts from the general public to provide recommendations on how to improve services for people with disabilities.
- Two additional Directors will serve as policy experts will be appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate - one director will be a policy expert in disability and inclusion and the other will be experienced in transit planning for high-needs areas
- The State Treasurer and the Executive Director of CDOT will serve as non-voting members to increase fiscal oversight and improve transportation planning coordination