

March, 5th 2025

Senate Transportation & Energy Committee  
Colorado General Assembly  
200 E Colfax, Room 346  
Denver, CO 80203-1716

### **SB25-161 Transit Reform**

Dear Esteemed Members of the Committee,

Greater Denver Transit (GDT) is in a **SUPPORT** position on **SB25-161 Transit Reform**, and requests that you vote “yes” when this bill comes before you. Beyond our support position, we would like to suggest a number of amendments for consideration. Our comments relate to the bill as introduced in Senate on Feb 11th, 2025 - [PDF Link](#)

#### **Section 1 - (RTD Mission and Purpose)**

GDT supports this section in its entirety.

#### **Section 2 - (RTD Powers)**

GDT supports this section in its entirety.

#### **Section 3 - (Aligning RTD Goals with the State, Employee Retention and Federal Assaults on Transit Workers)**

##### **Page 5, Line 27**

- It is requested that the bill be amended to make the employee retention goals broken out by represented and non-represented employee headcount versus what is budgeted and retention.

RTD’s represented employees are the backbone of the organization as without them, there is no transit service. Employee headcount and retention targets should acknowledge this, so that any accountability goals ensure that represented frontline workers are retained.

#### **Section 4 - (RTD Planning / Ten Year Plan / Comprehensive Operational Analysis)**

##### **Page 9, Line 22**

- It is requested to amend the bill to include reports as well as dashboards.

GDT has assessed the proposed requirements for data in this section and has determined it will be unfeasible for RTD to publish it all on a single page dashboard. Therefore it is suggested that the section is broadened to include reports

**Page 11, Line 15**

- It is requested to amend the bill to include the requirement for RTD to publish proposed schedules covering weekdays from 6am to 6pm on routes where timings will change at least 90 days in advance.

Regular RTD customers who engage with the service change process have long since expressed frustration that the agency does not provide adequate information at the public engagement stage on proposed route re-timings, leading to nasty surprises such as poor transfers when the final schedules are published, at which time it is too late for comments to be acted upon.

**Section 5 - (CDOT Transportation Commission)**

GDT supports this section in its entirety.

**Section 6 - (RTD Board)****Page 19, Line 4**

- It is requested to amend the bill to remove the addition of two ex-officio members to the RTD Board.

GDT's independent observations of the way the RTD Board functions indicate that representatives from CDOT and DRCOG would be most effective in working with RTD Directors and staff via study sessions and ad-hoc committees where topics can be discussed in detail and without the time constraints of Board meetings.

**Section 7 - (Election of RTD Directors - Elimination of Write-In Candidates)**

GDT supports this section in its entirety.

**Section 8 - (Election of RTD Directors)****Page 22, Line 26**

- It is requested to remove this Section from the bill.

This section provides for ex-officio directors who fail to complete their terms. See comment above for why GDT is opposed to ex-officio directors on the RTD Board.

**Section 9 - (Regional Transportation District Accountability Committee)****Page 24, Line 16**

- It is requested to amend the bill to indicate that the two current board members appointed to the accountability committee by the RTD Board be voting members of the committee.
- It is further requested to amend the bill to include an additional two voting members (bringing the total to four) appointed by the current RTD Board of Directors to the accountability committee such that the committee's total membership would include 15 voting members.

GDT is in agreement with the RTD Board on these two amendments which will add valuable transit agency experience to the accountability committee.

### Additional Section 10 - (Compensation of RTD Directors)

- It is requested to include a new section in the bill to amend Colorado Revised Statute, 32-9-117 to set the compensation of RTD Directors at 20% of a Colorado County Judge's salary, effective January 1st, 2026.

RTD Director compensation was last set in 2009 at \$12,000 per annum. This is clearly very outdated and completely fails to provide current RTD Directors with adequate and fair compensation for the many hours they put in each month attending to RTD business and representing their constituents. This item needs to be de-linked from any proposal to adjust the RTD Board's composition or structure, although the proposed Accountability Committee may choose to study and make recommendations on it.

Increasing director pay is also critical to ensuring that RTD Board elections are competitive, as there still exist significant barriers to candidate participation due to the low pay of board directors. By eliminating write-in candidates the state legislature limits the methods for candidate participation in board elections, and thus special attention should be paid to increasing the competitiveness of elections in as many other ways as possible, and this is the first and most important method to do so.

GDT would like to acknowledge the hard work of the sponsors so far and would like to emphasize that this Transit Reform bill is vastly improved from last year's effort. We are pleased to offer a **SUPPORT** position today.

Thanks for all you do,



James Flattum



Richard Bamber



June Churchill



Emma Griffin



Joe Meyer

CC: RTD Board of Directors  
Debra Johnson, RTD General Manager & CEO