

Same-Day Paratransit Innovation Act

Sponsored by Congresswoman Lateefah Simon (CA-12)

Background:

Paratransit provides shared, demand transportation for riders with disabilities who cannot utilize fixed-route public transportation. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), eligible riders must register with their local transit agency and book trips in advance.

Currently, the ADA only requires that complementary paratransit be operated on a next-day basis, forcing riders with disabilities to schedule all trips at least 24 hours in advance, with limited flexibility to accommodate last-minute needs related to employment, healthcare, caregiving, or social activities. This standard reflects an outdated technological environment and no longer aligns with modern expectations or mobility options.

Technological advancements in transit software now enable dynamic trip matching, real-time dispatching, route optimization, and the integration of multiple service providers, allowing agencies to offer same-day paratransit services more efficiently and cost-effectively for disabled riders.

The Same-Day Paratransit Innovation Act supports the modernization and greater deployment of same-day paratransit services at public transportation agencies for individuals with disabilities by:

- Increasing federal cost-share allowances for transit agencies (under formula funds 5310, 5307, and 5311 when meeting federal standards) that provide same-day paratransit services:
 - Same-day paratransit meeting minimum standards would get 70% for operating costs and those using exclusively agency-employed drivers would get 80% - both an increase from the the standard 50% match for operating costs.
 - Capital projects for same-day paratransit would get a 90% federal match.
 - *Note: the enhanced funding rules apply to 5307 and 5310 funds one year sooner than to 5311 (rural area) funds.*
- Requiring the Secretary of Transportation to establish minimum standards for same-day paratransit and technologies, such as cybersecurity, data privacy, and dynamic route scheduling and matching, in consultation with:
 - Transit labor organizations
 - Paratransit riders with disabilities
 - Technology providers
 - State and local transportation agencies, among others

Seniors and individuals with disabilities represent a growing share of transit-dependent riders, and demand for paratransit services is projected to increase in the coming decade, making the current next-day model increasingly burdensome and expensive to sustain. Establishing same-day paratransit standards is essential to ensuring these services keep pace with today's mobility needs and demographic trends across the country. The *Same-Day Paratransit Innovation Act* strengthens the federal commitment to riders with disabilities and supports communities in building transportation systems that are more responsive, inclusive, and sustainable.

Endorsements: *American Council of the Blind, Transform, Transbay Coalition, and Seamless Bay Area.*

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