



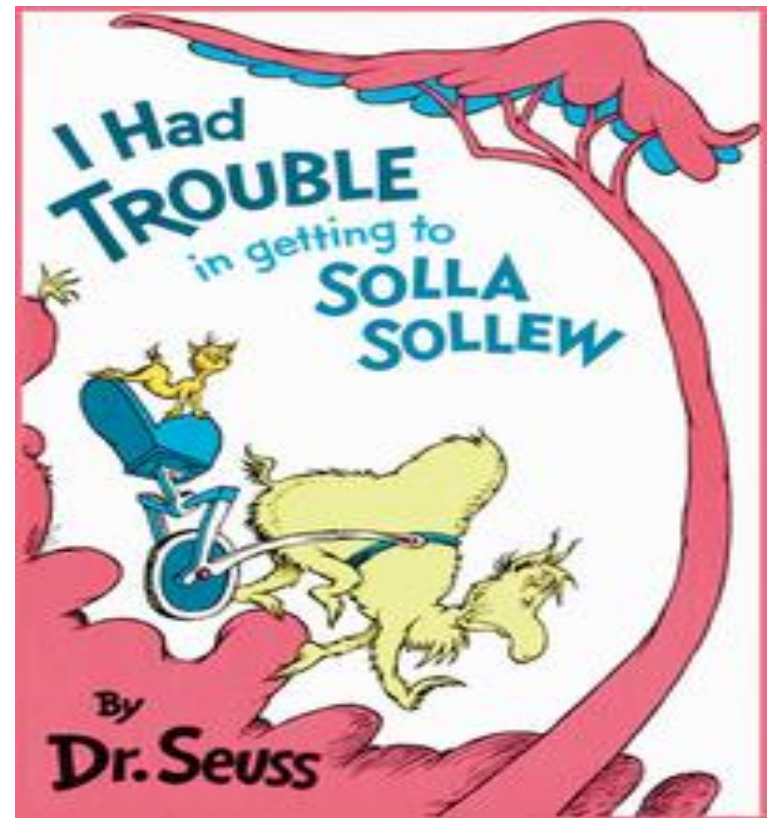
*The United Voice
of Independent Living
in Rural America*



2016 ACAA Annual Conference
May 26, 2016

Billy Altom

*I Had Trouble in Getting to Solla Sollew:
Transportation for Rural
Communities*





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The Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) is a national grass roots, consumer controlled, nonprofit membership organization consisting of centers for independent living, their satellites and branch offices, statewide independent living councils, other organizations and individuals concerned with the independent living issues of people with disabilities living in rural America.



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*“APRIL is a national membership organization
dedicated to advancing the rights and
responsibilities of people with disabilities in
rural America”*



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As a membership organization, providing training and technical assistance to our rural members is a critical component of the services we offer.

Equally as important to us, is ensuring that young people with disabilities are involved in all facets of program development and delivery. We are truly committed to the mantra:

Nothing About Us, Without Us.



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Putting the “TEA” in Transportation

- ISTEA 1991
- TEA-21 1998
- SAFETEA-LU 2005
- MAP-21 2012
- FAST Act 2015



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GROW AMERICA Act

Generating Renewal, Opportunity and Work
with Accelerated Mobility, Efficiency and
Rebuilding of Infrastructure and Communities
throughout America (GROW AMERICA) Act



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The Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living believes that we should look at transportation (both public and private) from the travelers' perspective and give people alternative community mobility options. Do people get where they want or need to go, when they need to get there? Do they get there safely? Is it energy efficient?



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APRIL's guiding principles

- * "All" public transportation should be accessible to "All" users, "All" the time.
- * Systems designed to meet the transit needs of people with disabilities will meet the needs of all transit users.
- * Accessible transportation means more than just having a vehicle available. It means people can actually use the transit service. It should also address the needs of people who are trying to be more energy efficient by reducing their use of private vehicles.
- * Accessibility and energy efficiency should not be separate competing priorities. They are equally important, and should be integrated. Vehicles and services need to be both accessible and energy efficient and that cannot be accomplished unless innovation takes an integrated approach to the two priorities.
- * Accessible transportation includes systems, services, vehicles, routes, stops, programs and all other aspects of transportation and must at least meet or exceed the minimum requirements set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act.



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“It is hereby declared to be the national policy that elderly and handicapped persons have the same right as other persons to utilize mass transportation facilities and services; that special efforts shall be made in the planning and design of mass transportation facilities and services so that the availability to elderly and handicapped persons of mass transportation which they can effectively utilize will be assured; and that all Federal programs offering assistance in the field of mass transportation (including the programs under this Act) should contain provisions implementing this policy.” Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1970, P.L. 91-453



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Tim Sheehan, Executive Director of the Center for Independent Living of Western Wisconsin, explained:

“One of the current issues is the lack of a common definition of ‘transit’ throughout the transportation system. Rural transportation (where it is available) is generally defined as specialized transportation.”



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This deficiency *creates **eligibility silos*** that in turn lead to ***competition*** for the limited amount of funding for individual programs. Numerous ***restrictions*** are imposed on rural providers: limited trip purposes, limited hours of service, client-only transportation, and duplicative services, to name a few. Also, the cost of transportation in rural areas is generally higher due to the longer distances traveled.



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Funding Sources for Rural Transportation

- 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities
 - unavailable, insufficient or inappropriate
 - includes 5317 activities

- 5311 Rural Transportation (populations under 50,000)
 - includes 5316 activities
 - Tribal Transit
 - Rural Transit Assistance Program



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Successful Strategies for Rural Transportation

Transportation services in rural areas take planning, creativity, and ingenuity. Low population and long distances can make traditional fixed-route and paratransit services too expensive or ineffective.

Strategies might include voucher programs, volunteers, flex services, taxicabs, mobility management, coordinated services, car ownership, or a combination of these services.



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Today, 46 years after the Urban Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1970 and 26 years after enactment of the ADA, minimal or nonexistent transit services in rural areas still create serious barriers to employment, accessible health care, and full participation in society for people with disabilities.



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“America’s most innovative, efficient and flexible transportation providers are those serving rural areas. They are the transportation solution for the next century.”

Dale Marsico, Executive Director CTAA



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If you are not at the table, you are on the menu.