

SB26-150 - Modernizing the Regional Transportation District

Senator Ball, Senator Jodeh | Representative Froelich, Representative Jackson

Fact Sheet 4.28.26

This bill operationalizes the recommendations made by the 2025-2026 RTD Accountability Committee, established because the status quo isn't delivering. RTD is fundamentally off track from providing the quality of transit service that the District needs. Rampant reliability issues have plagued the network for years, service levels and ridership numbers haven't rebounded anywhere close to pre-pandemic levels, and longstanding public trust issues in the agency's ability to deliver on the promises of FasTracks remain unaddressed.



History and Process

- This has been a years-long process starting in 2020 with the first iteration of the RTD Accountability Committee led by DRCOG. The Committee stopped short of issuing final recommendations on board structure, instead recommending that after a few years to allow other recommendations to be implemented, an independent body be formed to evaluate board structure, develop a problem statement, and recommend solutions.
- In 2024, transit champions in the General Assembly held 11 Transit Tuesday stakeholder meetings that informed SB25-161, Transit Reform and the creation of the 2025-2026 Accountability Committee.
- The 2025-2026 Accountability Committee met publicly 12 times spanning more than 43 hours between August and January with more than 30 public comments.
- The Accountability Committee Final Report was released on January 30, 2026 and presented at a joint hearing of the Senate and House transportation committees on February 4 stating that *"that governance reform is the most urgent and consequential issue within their charge."*
- The Committee concluded that the current Board's size, lack of competition for elected seats, lack of expertise, and limited visibility impede effective leadership, accountability, and oversight.

SB26-150 addresses these concerns by:

- **Creating clearer accountability and nimbler decision-making** reducing the current 15-member board to 9, bringing it in line with the majority of transit boards in the country.
- **Continuing to provide direct democratic representation** with 5 elected members each residing within their respective director districts, ensuring that a majority of the board remains democratically elected.
- **Bringing expertise to the Board** making 4 of the 9 board seats at-large appointed experts. The criteria for the at-large seats include expertise in public finance, land use, transportation planning, and disproportionately impacted communities, with one seat required to be a current or former ATU member and DRCOG providing a nominating list for 1 seat. All at-large appointments are required to reflect the geographic and demographic diversity of the district's ridership and service area.
- **Attracting high-quality candidates to the Board** increasing board and chairperson salaries.
- **Helping the Board do their job** by setting specific responsibilities on the annual budget, policy direction aimed at growing ridership, hiring the GM/CEO on performance measures aligned with the strategic plan, and ensuring the General Counsel reports to the Board.
- **Directing RTD to create a paratransit study and service plan** to address service needs for riders with disabilities.

Why Action is Urgent

While the agency is taking steps to stabilize operations and improve safety and transparency, it is still not well-positioned to build a reliable, world-class, affordable transit system for the Denver metro region and the Front Range. An ineffective governance structure has been one of the foundational problems that has either caused or failed to avert poor outcomes for riders and taxpayers. **This opportunity for reform has been many years in the making, and we need to capitalize on the momentum from the Accountability Committee.**

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