

House Transportation, Housing & Local Government

04/28/2026

SB26-150 Modernizing Regional Transportation District

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Bennett Rutledge Against themselves	Vice Chair Stewart and members of the committee, SB26-150 Modernizing Regional Transportation District is unbelievable. The big change is, where current law provides for 15 board members, all of whom are elected, the bill provides that, beginning January 1, 2029, the current members' terms will expire and the terms of 9 new members will begin, with 5 of those members being elected and 4 being appointed by the governor. Not only does this all but lock up the RTD board with the governor's cronies, it gives raises all around. This allegedly modifies RTD, yet does not seem to do anything toward furtherance of the stretches of light-rail which have been promised, but not delivered. Vote NO on SB26-150 Modernizing Regional Transportation District
Jaime Lewis For Colorado Cross Disability Coalition	My name is Jaime Lewis and I served on the RTD Accountability Committee as Vice Chair. My background is in transportation. I am the Transit Advisor for the Colorado Cross Disability Coalition. I recently served one year as an RTD Director to fill a vacancy. This provides me with a unique perspective to SB26-150. My take away from the committee is that for RTD to be more successful there has to be a strong relationship with municipalities and the state legislature. The 3 legged stool will ensure that the vision for sustainable and progressive transportation can become a reality. Things that concerned the committee was RTD's lack of urgency and flexibility. Our goal in making our governance recommendations is to make RTD address issues and concerns in a progressive and decisive manner.

	<p>Other issues to be addressed are Transited Orientated Development. At a recent transportation forum a speaker stated that the one consistent tool that guarantees rider growth is dense development.</p> <p>Work force issues must also be addressed. The turnover of represented employees is much too high. We need to work with the ATU to change operational norms to retain drivers, i.e. child care.</p> <p>Lastly, diversity is sorely needed on the board. We hope that the 4 appointed directors have not only the professional experience we are looking for, i.e. finance, land use, but also candidates that have actively worked in our diverse communities such as BIPOC, latino, elderly, Disabled, and the homeless.</p> <p>This bill does not address all issues from the committee's report but is a good starting point.</p> <p>CCDC and other disability groups look forward to working with you as we continue to develop better transportation for our region.</p> <p>Jaime Lewis CCDC Transit Advisor Vice Chair RTD Accountability Committee</p>
<p>Jeffrey Otte For themself</p>	<p>I'm writing in favor of SB26-150, as an ordinary person who regularly uses RTD services. I like taking the bus. Since I was a kid, I've felt public transportation was the most fun way to get around, and as an adult, I like that I can knock out work during my commute instead of sitting behind the wheel not getting anything done.</p> <p>So it says something that I hardly ever take the bus anymore.</p> <p>The service is spotty. Where I live, in the northwest suburbs, the routes are so sparse it's hardly a practical way to get around, unless I'm going either to downtown Denver, downtown Boulder, or the airport. And while those routes are valuable, they're also unreliable, and I can't afford to wonder whether the bus that's supposed to come</p>

	<p>is actually going to show up. It’s been this way for years. RTD needs reform.</p> <p>A change in the structure of the board - to a leaner, better paid, more empowered board with real expertise - is a step in the right direction. The RTD accountability committee, appointed by this body, has returned with this recommendation, and now it’s time to make that recommendation a reality.</p> <p>Will it work? I sure hope so. It may be an iterative process. Either way, it’s clear that a change will need to happen. Let’s start that change today.</p>
<p>Lee Kemp For themselves</p>	<p>I am in support of SB-150. There is a breakdown of understanding what public transportation is all about at the Board level and I have seen this problem for over the last several years. SB-150 helps address this issue by appointing and electing constituents within the RTD District who not only have a vested interest how service is provided, but have a skill set needed to bring focus on what makes a first-class public transit system.</p>



**Colorado Neurodiversity
Chamber of Commerce**

10648 Huron Street, #902
Northglenn, CO 80234

(303) 414-0045 

info@cndcc.org 

www.CNDCC.org 

To:

**House Committee on Transportation,
Housing & Local Government**

Colorado House of Representatives
Colorado State Capitol

April 26th, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the House Committee on
Transportation, Housing, & Local Government,

The Colorado Neurodiversity Chamber of Commerce urges policymakers to support a **YES vote on SB26-150**, legislation that modernizes the Regional Transportation District (RTD) to improve accountability, transparency, and service delivery for all riders. **This bill represents an important step toward building a more responsive and equitable transportation system, one that recognizes transportation as a critical link to employment, economic mobility, and full community participation.**

For neurodivergent people and people with disabilities, reliable and accessible transportation is not optional, it is foundational. Barriers within transportation systems, including inconsistent service, limited accessibility options, and gaps in paratransit, disproportionately impact people with disabilities. **These challenges can prevent people from securing and maintaining employment, accessing education and healthcare, and engaging meaningfully in their communities. Without dependable transit, opportunities remain out of reach.**


SB26-150 addresses these concerns by strengthening oversight and requiring more robust planning to meet the needs of riders. **Importantly, the bill emphasizes stakeholder engagement, ensuring that the voices of people with disabilities, including neurodivergent people, are meaningfully included in shaping transportation solutions.** This approach reflects a critical shift: moving from systems designed without disabled people in mind to systems informed directly by those who rely on them most.

The bill also creates an opportunity to identify and address persistent gaps in paratransit and accessibility services. For many neurodivergent people, **transportation barriers are not solely physical, they may also involve sensory sensitivities, challenges with navigating complex systems, or the need for predictable and consistent service.** A more accountable and user-informed RTD can better respond to these needs, resulting in a system that is not only accessible, but truly usable.



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Improving transportation access has direct economic implications. **When people with disabilities can reliably commute, they are better positioned to enter and remain in the workforce, contribute their skills and talents, and achieve greater financial independence.** Employers also benefit from a broader, more inclusive talent pool. In this way, SB26-150 supports not only individual outcomes, but also Colorado's broader economic vitality.

A YES vote on SB26-150 affirms a commitment to equity, access, and inclusion. It signals recognition that **transportation systems must work for everyone**, including the neurodivergent community and people with disabilities, and that meaningful change requires both accountability and community input.

The Colorado Neurodiversity Chamber of Commerce encourages legislators to support SB26-150 and take an important step toward a more inclusive, accessible, and economically vibrant Colorado.

Regards,



Leslie Espinoza
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Vikki Ortiz
POLICY COMMITTEE CHAIR

Testimony in Support of SB26-150

My name is **Annabelle Cooper** and I'm with **Powder7**, a family-owned ski shop in Golden. I'm here today to urge your support for [SB26-150](#).

In business, we have to constantly question the "why" behind the way we do things. We have to look at our systems and ask: "Is this still serving our mission, or are we just doing it because that's how it's always been done?"

We can see that here with RTD. At one time, the current model was designed to meet the needs of a different era, and it likely served its purpose well then. But we have to be honest—that model is no longer working for the reality of 2026. At Powder7, I've had many conversations with staff and customers who used to rely on RTD but now find it unapproachable. They find it less convenient due to significant safety concerns, lack of consistency, and poor line connections.

When a system stops being reliable, people don't just "deal with it"—they opt out. For a business like ours, solid public transportation is a necessity. It provides better, more affordable commutes for our staff and opens up access for our customers.

SB26-150 is about having the courage to set a new standard. It moves us away from a stagnant status quo and toward a model of continuous improvement:

- **A Focused Board:** Moving from 15 members to 9 creates a leaner leadership team capable of the agile decision-making required in today's world.
- **Professional Expertise:** Bringing in experts in finance and transportation planning ensures the agency has the specialized knowledge to solve modern problems like safety and reliability.
- **Accountability:** The reporting requirements ensure we never stop questioning the "why" and that we are constantly measuring our progress.

We shouldn't be afraid to change a model that has outlived its effectiveness. We need an RTD that works as hard as Colorado's small businesses do—one that is safe, consistent, and ready for the future.

Please vote **YES on SB26-150** to help us set this new standard for Colorado transit. Thank you for your time.



Powder7 Owners & Staff skiing Buffalo Pass, CO