

Dear Colleagues,

FYI. (This will mostly affect veterans in the Montachusets Regional Transportation Authority vicinity).

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today announced \$34.6 million for 55 projects in 32 states and Guam to enhance access to local, affordable transportation services for military families and spouses, and wounded warriors.

Many military families live in suburban and rural communities where filling the gas tank for long commutes is expensive and public transportation is limited. Projects funded by the Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative will bridge the gap by enabling states and communities to build or expand so-called “one-click, one-call” centers that offer comprehensive information on local transportation options, and other community services, with just a single phone call or click of the mouse. Typically, such information is not available in one convenient place, and better local coordination will result in better services for veterans and nonveterans alike.

- \$2 million to the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority in central Massachusetts to expand an existing one-call center by adding agencies serving local veterans. The center will offer an array of traveler and community services and act as a one-stop shop to military families and spouses who need them.

In addition to USDOT, the Department of Veterans Affairs is contributing up to \$3 million for the VA health care network to coordinate veterans’ transportation needs with community transportation systems. The Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy is contributing \$250,000 for social media tools and training to include veterans and the military in community transportation decision-making. The Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Defense are also lending critical support, in part through their extensive networks of community-based advocates. Additional in-kind support is provided by over a dozen national veteran service organizations.

See Secretary LaHood’s blog post here: <http://fastlane.dot.gov/2011/11/fta-veterans-initiative.html>

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