

Good Afternoon,

My name is Mark Anderson; I am here today representing members of the New Vision Advocates.

Our group is made up of members who have a developmental disability.

We advocate for changes to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

One important change is equal citizenship and participation within our community.

On behalf of our group and others with disabilities I am here to support the proposed subsidy model for public transportation for all low income Londoners.

The majority of people with developmental disabilities are on a fixed monthly income that forces us to live well below the poverty line. By providing a 50% subsidy for people who can't afford a bus pass, this will go a long way to improving their access to the community. Although \$40.50 may not seem like a lot of money for some, for me and others living on a fixed income, this could mean that people may not have to rely on the food bank or people may be able to access health care when they need it and others may be able to get out to socialize more and not be isolated in their homes.

Many of us are unable to drive and rely on public transportation as our only way to get to work, to medical appointments, volunteer jobs, attend meetings, and go to the store, the bank and to any community activity.

I rely on the city bus to get to work, get to appointments, get groceries, see my family, friends and attend meetings.

Being on a fixed income prevents me from being able to afford a monthly bus pass; I am forced to purchase tickets and then prioritize what I do based on my ability to afford bus tickets. This restricts my freedom to use the bus whenever I need or want to go somewhere.

My part time job is my main priority. Being a contributing member of my community is important to me. I must use the bus to get to work, when I cannot afford enough bus tickets to last the month, this means I may not be able to attend medical appointments, travel to get groceries, go to the bank or attend social activities with friends and family.

Some members of our group are forced to use our local food bank because after they pay their monthly living expenses like rent, bills and purchase their bus tickets, there isn't enough money left for food.

We are certain that the lives of many people who live on a fixed income would be greatly improved if the cost of bus passes are subsidized for everyone living below the poverty line.

Affordable transportation is a key component to removing barriers that affect people's ability to gain and maintain employment, access health care, and recreational, educational and social activities.

We do not want to take away from the groups that are currently receiving transportation subsidies, but we need a subsidy that is fair for everyone, where the subsidy is based on ability to pay, not by age or disability.

This subsidy model will not only enable people with developmental disabilities to be more actively involved in our community, but it will also impact all Londoner's who live below the poverty line, allowing all of us greater access to our community.

This is why this Proposed subsidy model for public transportation must be accepted and approved.

Thank you.