



State Senator

Robin Wright-Jones

District 5



Column For Week of: **March 9, 2009**

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## Legislation Would Improve, Expand St. Louis-Area Mass Transportation Systems

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I have filed a bill that would include public mass transportation systems as allowable projects within [transportation development districts](#). TDDs are formed to develop, improve, maintain and operate transportation-related projects relative to the needs of those within the district's boundaries. Projects within a TDD may take many forms, including roadways, bus stops and light rail. My legislation, [Senate Bill 477](#), would amend the Missouri Transportation Development District Act to include mass transportation systems, which are widely used by citizens in the St. Louis area.

Senate Bill 477 would also create a "Transportation Development District Sales Tax Trust Fund" as a separate account in which designated sales tax revenues generated by these particular types of TDDs would be deposited.

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There are several forms of public mass transportation in the St. Louis metropolitan region operating under the "Metro" banner, including MetroBus, MetroLink light rail, and the Metro Call-A-Ride paratransit system. These services provide freedom and mobility to those who would not or might not otherwise be able to move from place to place on their own.

Several MetroBus routes have been designed to provide faster, more streamlined service for long distance trips, while other routes have been added to facilitate peak hours of service. And for those who are visiting the St. Louis area, a route has been created to help conventioners and tourists visit St. Louis' popular attractions, including the City Museum, Grand Center, and the Missouri Botanical Garden.

MetroLink operates six trips per hour on routes running from Lambert International Airport and Shrewsbury on the west to just past Bellville, Illinois, on the east. MetroLink ridership allows for the removal of approximately 1,636 cars per hour from our highway system in each direction. Nine MetroLink stations were recently included on the route, adding service to Washington University, and the communities of University City, Clayton, Richmond Heights, Brentwood, Maplewood and Shrewsbury.

For mobility-challenged citizens, there is Call-A-Ride, Metro's paratransit service. Call-A-Ride is a curb-to-van service provided by reservation and makes more than 55,000 trips each month to customers with disabilities in Missouri.

For more information on Metro's services, please visit [www.metrostlouis.org](http://www.metrostlouis.org) or call 314-231-2345. You can also e-mail questions to [transitinformation@metorstlouis.org](mailto:transitinformation@metorstlouis.org).

It makes sense to extend the reach of the diverse array of public mass transit options in the region, which is the intent of my legislation. A Senate panel has approved SB 477 for debate by the full body, which is a promising status for bills at what is now the mid-point of the year's regular legislative session. Final passage of the legislation would make a far-reaching impact on the St. Louis region. Broadening the ways mass transit can be expanded broadens the opportunities of the masses.

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please feel free to contact my office at (573) 751-2606.

*Senator Robin Wright-Jones represents a portion of  
St. Louis City in the Missouri Senate.*



### Contact Information

**Capitol Office**  
State Capitol  
Room 425  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

**Phone Number:**  
573.751.2606

**Fax:**  
573.751.7638

**Website:**  
<http://www.senate.mo.gov/wright-jones>

**District Office:**  
3303 Olive Ave.  
St. Louis, MO  
63103

**Phone Number:**  
314.533.8800

**Fax:**  
314.533.8600