



MICHIGAN'S PREMIER MOTORCOACH CONNECTION
BETWEEN EAST LANSING, ANN ARBOR,
BRIGHTON & DETROIT METRO AIRPORT

e-news

SPECIAL UPDATE

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Michigan Flyer Needs Your Help

Five months ago—on March 16—Michigan Flyer completely suspended service. We were worried about the health of passengers, drivers, and staff as the coronavirus spread. And people stayed home instead of riding with us because government authorities restricted non-essential travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

So our fleet of luxury motorcoaches—which had been transporting over 250,000 passengers a year between East Lansing, Brighton, Ann Arbor, and Detroit Metro Airport (DTW)—came screeching to a halt.

Since then, literally hundreds of you have reached out to express concern and ask when we will resume our essential daily connections for intercity commuters and air travelers.

We're deeply grateful to all of you for your patience and past patronage. But here's the dilemma we now face:

Safety Yes, but No Funding Yet

If safety were the only issue, we could address it in a heartbeat—just as our parent company, Indian Trails, Inc.,



unsustainable loss, month after month. We know this for sure because the subsidized public carriers that are currently operating continue to experience very low ridership. Also, most of our passengers use airlines at DTW to travel to or from the mid-Michigan region, and the airlines are still operating at only 20 percent capacity.

The key to restarting Michigan Flyer (as with all privately owned bus companies that operate public transportation without subsidies) is temporary government support of the same type that is being provided to virtually ALL other public transportation companies.

did with extensive masking, distancing, and sanitizing requirements to minimize the chance of virus spread. [It then restarted daily scheduled bus service on August 8.](#)

So, as far as precautionary measures go, we're ready to roll.

However, unlike most other forms of public transportation—i.e., public transit, trains, and airlines—Michigan Flyer has been funded almost entirely by passenger fares, not tax dollars. So, without some government support now, we would operate at an

The Big Picture for Bus Companies

The U.S. motorcoach industry consists of about 3,000 private bus companies, mostly family-owned small businesses like Michigan Flyer. About 90 percent are still shut down, says the American Bus Association.

Before the pandemic, they connected cities with one another and with rural areas, transported commuters to

jobs, and served as the sole mode of intercity transportation for many Americans. They provided nearly 700 million passenger trips annually—second only to the airlines—connecting families and friends, taking tourists to their destinations, and moving survivors and troops in the wake of natural disasters. Many are apt to go out of business for good. The American Bus Association predicts that 30 to 40 percent will not survive without some form of financial relief.

Unlike the airlines, which received billions in bailout money from the federal government, [the private bus industry has largely been left to fend for itself.](#) But that could change if Congress passes the Coronavirus Economic Relief for Transportation Services (CERTS) Act, which is pending in the U.S. Senate and House. It would provide \$10 billion in emergency relief grants to the industry—potentially leading to the restart of services such as the Michigan Flyer airport shuttle.

Why Indian Trails but Not Michigan Flyer?

The Michigan Dept. of Transportation (MDOT), together with the Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation, has directed \$2.4 million in federal CARES Act funds to Indian Trails in order to cover losses on its daily scheduled routes throughout Michigan and into Chicago, Milwaukee, and Duluth. This will keep Indian Trails' buses running for the rest of 2020 and perhaps into early 2021 as ridership rebuilds.



However, Michigan Flyer has NOT been provided with any temporary CARES Act support, despite our request to share in that funding with all the other intercity bus carriers in the state. After all, Michigan Flyer is included on [MDOT's official map of Michigan's Intercity Bus System](#), and has been delivering high-quality intercity bus service to the public since 2006.



Please Consider Taking Action

You may be able to help get Michigan Flyer back on the road—and serving you with dependable, environmentally friendly transportation—by writing to government leaders who are concerned about public transportation in Michigan. All we would need is temporary, one-time funding, even if it's just enough to restart with a reduced schedule.

It's simple to email Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and MDOT:

✍ Just copy the following addresses into the “To” field of an email message: whitmerg1@michigan.gov;

Gretch.Whitmer@michigan.gov; MDOT@Michigan.gov;

✍ Make sure we get a copy of your email by pasting info@michiganflyer.com into the “CC” field.

✍ For the “Subject” line, write “Please support temporary funding for Michigan Flyer”.

✍ Finally, in the body of your message, explain briefly why Michigan Flyer is important to you.

Please also consider contacting your Senators and Representative in Washington, D.C. It's easy to do by using the email forms on their websites, which can be found at the links below.

✍ U.S. Senators for Michigan are [Debbie Stabenow](#) and Gary Peters (he already supports the CERTS Act).

✍ To reach your U.S. Congressional Representative, [click here](#).

Thank you very much! We hope to serve you again soon.

Why Drive?

Booking is easy, [click here](#) to view schedules on



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