

Jack De Beradinis
Regional Transportation Program
LD 1559

To: Joint Standing Committee on Transportation
Fr: Jack De Beradinis, Executive Director; Regional
Transportation Program (RTP)

Dear Committee Members:

I write to urge your committee to provide full support for LD1559.

RTP has long provided transportation for disabled, senior, low-income and general public riders throughout Cumberland County. Our demand/response service transports individuals to critical medical appointments and treatments, special needs schooling, family and child visitations, senior shopping, entertainment, etc. Our paratransit service transports disabled individuals who are unable to use the public fixed-route systems in the Greater Portland area due to their physical and/or mental challenges. As a State-designated "regional transportation corporation," RTP also operates the Lakes Region Explorer that provides public rural transportation for the communities along Route 302 from Bridgton to Portland.

As with other transportation providers throughout the State, RTP is constrained to expand its current services due to the dramatic increase in capital and operating costs related to vehicles, labor, services, supplies, etc. Our normal funding sources remain unable to increase funding sufficient to cover these additional expenses. The special FTA funding we received during the COVID period is now due to expire leaving a substantial funding gap that we will be unable to bridge without the prospect of reductions in service.

I submit that increased funding through LD1559 will well serve our ridership and the thousands of residents and visitors throughout Maine who depend on the availability of quality public and specialized transportation.

Thank you for your consideration.