

Sally Chappell
Bridgton
LD 1559

Dear Senator Chipman, Representative Williams and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation:

My name is Sally Chappell; I live in Bridgton, and I would like to testify in support of LD 1559.

There are some people who:

- 1) Can't drive
- 2) Shouldn't drive
- 3) Don't want to drive
- 4) Aren't allowed to drive
- 5) Can't afford to drive

These were our selling points when a committee of people in the northwest corner of Cumberland County lobbied our Select Board in Bridgton to provide funding for the Lakes Region Explorer, a bus to provide operation between Bridgton and Portland on a regular schedule. Happily, we succeeded with the project in 2015.

Now there is another opportunity to expand public transportation for those of us living in rural areas who fit one or more of the above categories. In my case, I am an older driver (aged 76) who would like to quit driving. Maine is populated with many older drivers whose reflexes and mental sharpness are not as good as they once were. I have had the deeply affecting experience of losing both of my parents in a car accident in 1978. The driver of the car that crossed a medial strip on an interstate highway and crashed into my parents' car was an older woman who might have lost consciousness behind the wheel. I don't know for sure.

My husband is blind and has never driven a car. This has affected our lives in terms of reduced opportunities for employment for both of us as we have always been a one-car family. I was able to ensure that our children had transportation to extra-curricular activities, but what about parents who can't afford to do that?

Even though my present vehicle is a 2010 Toyota Prius which gets excellent mileage, I am concerned about greenhouse gas emissions from the increasing number of personal vehicles on our crowded roads. Mass transit (which can include bus, metro, tram, and commuter rail) is a key solution to our climate crisis and ranks 37th in a list of 100 climate solutions according to Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming (Editor: Paul Hawken).

As a citizen who believes that progressive taxation helps all social classes of people and that mobility is an important element of a well-functioning society, I am hopeful the Transportation Committee will approve LD 1559.