



April 24, 2023

Testimony in Support of LD 1559

An Act to Advance the State's Public Transit Systems by Reinvigorating the Public Transit Advisory Council and Increasing Funding

Greetings Chairs Chipman and Williams and the distinguished members of the Committee on Transportation:

My name is James Tassé, and I am the assistant director of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM). Our mission is to make Maine better and safer for bicycling and walking. On behalf of our more than 20,000 members and supporters, I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 1559 “An Act to Advance the State's Public Transit Systems by Reinvigorating the Public Transit Advisory Council and Increasing Funding.”

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine is the state’s principal advocate for “active transportation,” which refers primarily to human-powered modes of travel such as walking and bicycling, using wheelchairs, or using low-speed electric-assist devices like e-bikes. We support LD 1559 because effective transit must be accompanied by active transportation and a sustainable transportation system must prioritize non-single occupancy vehicle travel. An Advisory Council that includes the users of public transit can help ensure actions taken will meet the needs of communities.

Walking, bicycling, and other low-speed mobility options are always an important element in the transit picture, as those options address the so-called “last mile” issue of actually getting to (or from) a transit stop. Similarly, robust transit systems enable people to use active transportation for more and longer trips, by say, riding a bike to a bus stop in Portland, putting the bike on the bus, riding the bus to Lewiston, and then riding the bike to the destination there. Transit is the “force multiplier” of active transportation, and greatly expands the range a person can travel without needing an automobile.

The BCM believes that a strong transit system combined with a strong network of sidewalks, bike paths, and active transportation routes across the state is vital to Maine’s transportation future. Such a network will make Maine better and safer for bicycling and walking, which, again, is our mission. The BCM recommends an Ought to Pass on LD 1559.

Thank you for your time and service to the people of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "James Tassé".

James Tassé, Assistant Director

James Tasse
Bicycle Coalition of Maine
LD 1559

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