



April 25, 2023

Written Testimony of Chad Heid

The 131st Legislature, Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

In Support of LD 1559

Senator Chipman, Representative Williams and members of the Committee on Transportation, My name is Chad Heid and I am the Executive Director of Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach Transit (BSOOB Transit). We operate fixed and flex route services in and around the named municipalities, along with providing transportation services in Scarborough, South Portland and Portland.

Public transportation provides vital connections for Mainers in both urban and rural areas, allowing them to access employment, medical appointments, grocery shopping and other important services. With proper investment and funding support, public transportation services also generate economic activity and provide a broader recruitment base for employers. In areas of ongoing development and population growth, public transit can also serve to reduce the impacts of traffic congestion, and the costly infrastructure enhancements required with increasing vehicle miles travelled.

Public transportation providers have opportunities to receive Federal funding to support 50% of the costs to operate services, but these funding obligations require a 50% local match. Given the increasing costs of labor, fuel, and other essential activities, it is vital that additional funds be defined to support existing transit services. Further, as has been detailed in PACTS regional plans: Connect 2045, and Transit Together, the BSOOB Transit community merits transit service frequency and span enhancements that can only be achieved through additional fiscal support. The proposed \$13.6 million defined in LD 1559 to support transit operations would be a step in the right direction.

This Bill also proposes additional MaineDOT staff to focus on public transportation planning and enhancing the statewide mobility efforts. Given the dedicated work MaineDOT undertook to complete the "Family of Plans – Transit Plan" allocating additional resources to the further development and implementation of these types of plans seems a natural next step.

Lastly, this Bill proposes adjustments to the form and function of the Public Transit Advisory Council (PTAC), with a specific set of objectives to achieve in the next calendar year. As the Executive Director of a public transit agency, having a more engaged and deliberate statewide council on transit would be quite beneficial in advancing initiatives.

I urge you to support LD 1559 during this Special Session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chad Heid". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chad Heid
Executive Director
BSOOB Transit