



53 Baxter Boulevard, Suite 202 | Portland, ME 04101
Phone: 866-554-5380 | Fax: 207-775-5727 | TTY: 877-434-7598
aarp.org/me | me@aarp.org | twitter: @aarpmaine
facebook.com/aarpmaine | instagram.com/aarpme

AARP Testimony in Support of LD 263 Resolve, to Provide Rural Nonmedical Transportation Services to the Elderly and Adults with Disabilities Receiving Home and Community Benefits Under MaineCare

Greetings Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and members of the Committee On Health and Human Services. My name is Riley Worth from AARP Maine.

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. On behalf of our nearly 200,000 members statewide, thank you for the opportunity to share testimony today. We thank Representative Shagoury for bringing forward this bill and will be offering testimony in support of LD 263.

During the last 5-year census, it was found that nearly 7% of all Maine households (40,000) do not have access to a vehicle for transportation purposes, equating to roughly 50,000 individuals. Additionally, 11,000 households, about 43,000 Mainers, are sharing one vehicle amongst at least four other people. These individuals are spread throughout the state, with all but 3 counties containing at least 1,000 households that have zero access to a vehicle.¹

The data shows that these challenges also are more likely to affect older Mainers, with 9% of households that are 65 and over having no access to a vehicle, and nearly 15,000 individuals over the age of 75 having no license at all. As Maine's population continues to age, the number of households without vehicle access in Maine may grow 15%, from about 40,000 currently to 46,000 in 2040, if current demographic trends hold.²

Those receiving services as part of the Home and Community Benefits Program for the Elderly and Adults with Disabilities are part of these statistics and are fully deserving of the dignity that readily available transportation under this bill would provide.

While non-emergency transportation (NET) is currently covered by Maine Care for medical purposes, for non-covered transportation support many Mainers are relying on a network

¹ Maine Applied Research. (2025). *Transportation needs in Maine*. <https://www.jtgfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/JTGF-Transportation-in-Maine-Data-Brief-Jan-2025.pdf>

² Maine Applied Research. (2025). *Transportation needs in Maine*

of volunteer programs.³ While effective and impactful, these programs are not widely available in the entire state, leaving many rural communities out. Be it getting to an AARP foundation tax aid site to get free help to file taxes or utilizing the support to facilitate grocery shopping or getting to other non-medical but necessary services, the additional funding proposed by this bill for nonmedical transport will improve the quality of life for older Mainers.⁴ LD 263 will be especially impactful to such Mainers as they continue to age in place in rural areas, where the average yearly cost of transportation for an adult is \$2,000 higher than in urban districts.⁵

As this committee considers the legislation, we recommend exploring opportunities for ongoing funding for this program. There may be opportunities for long-term funding sources or partnerships through existing networks to provide and sustain the needed transportation. When considering what could create a successful pilot, we would recommend ensuring that, as part of this pilot, there is an assessment of community needs, collaboration with stakeholders, commitment to designing flexible and accessible service options (door to door rides, fixed route shuttles, or ride-sharing partnerships), extensive pilot program promotion, and strong safety and service standards.

AARP Maine urges the members of this Committee to support LD 263 to improve the quality of life available to those covered under the Home and Community Benefits Program for the Elderly and Adults with Disabilities. In a state where the average used car sells for \$30,000 dollars, and 7% of all Maine households spread throughout the counties have no vehicle access, this bill is a step in the right direction to expanding the quality of life of individuals throughout our state.⁶

Thank you for the opportunity to testify if you have any questions please contact me at rworth@arp.org or Bridget Quinn at bquinn@arp.org.

Riley Worth
AARP Maine

³ *Transportation for Healthy Aging | Maine Council on Aging*. (n.d.).

<https://mainecouncilonaging.org/transportation-for-healthy-aging/>

⁴ Binette, J., & Farago, F. (2023). *Where we live, where we age: Older adults' current and future transportation needs – Fact sheet*. <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00479.005>

⁵ Maine Applied Research. (2025). *Transportation needs in Maine*

⁶ Valentine, A. (2025, January 3). *Car Ownership Statistics 2025*. Forbes Advisor. <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/car-insurance/car-ownership-statistics/>

