



April 3, 2025

Good afternoon, Chairs Ingwerson and Meyer, and members of the Joint Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Zoe Miller. I am the Executive Director of the Moving Maine Network and a resident of Portland. Moving Maine works with people and organizations in all parts of Maine to advance transportation access. We focus especially on the mobility needs of people who cannot drive or struggle to afford transportation.

First, I want to acknowledge the difficult job that you have as legislators and members of this Committee and express gratitude on behalf of Moving Maine's members.

I'm here today to voice support for LD 1125. Though imperfect in its approach, the bill addresses an important part of Maine's urgent transportation access issues – the need to improve MaineCare Transportation.

Transportation plays a central role in so many aspects of our lives. Dependable rides make it possible to get to work, see a doctor, pick up groceries and prescriptions, to visit family and friends, and gather for community events.

However, many families and individuals in Maine lack safe, affordable, and reliable transportation. In 2024, the Moving Maine Network listened to more than 1500 Mainers through virtual forums, our in-person summit, stories submitted to our website and by email, and a statewide survey. We heard clearly that throughout rural, suburban, and urban parts of the state, people who cannot drive or struggle to afford a personal vehicle are exhausted by the stress and isolation that comes with lacking reliable, affordable, and appropriate transportation access. Recent data collection efforts tell us that this is not a small problem. Moving Maine's recent survey found that two in five Maine adults are experiencing transportation insecurity – which means facing financial, systemic, and relational barriers that contribute to the inability to access needed services or destinations comfortably, conveniently, and affordably.

In our current under-resourced and fragmented transportation system, we are only meeting 11% of the estimated need (2025 Public Transit Advisory Council report to the Legislature)

The good news is that this problem is solvable and we are grateful to Rep. Bridgeo for bringing attention to this issue. Moving Maine is excited that we have two additional Bipartisan bills coming forward:

- An Act to Improve MaineCare Transportation; and
- An Act to Strengthen Coordination of Community Transportation

Together, we believe together, these bills forge the path for better transportation access in Maine.

They focus on three key solutions:

1. Ensuring that Maine invests our federal and state dollars in transportation services that truly benefits the riders – and establishing structures that hold all MaineCare brokers accountable for quality, people-centered service. People who rely on state and federally-funded transportation are more likely to be older and have disabilities. As some of our most vulnerable Mainers, they deserve the best care.
2. Supporting our community-based solutions to sustain and grow by providing the capacity they need. Our bills advance the use of Mobility Management – a proven best practice for providing efficient and cost-effective transportation services.
3. Preventing the unraveling of existing coordination of funders and providers of community transportation. Strong coordination enables braiding of funds and making the most of Maine's transportation dollars across the rural, suburban, and urban communities in our state.

The bottom line is that we need to preserve and grow what is working by prioritizing coordination and community-driven solutions. We are deeply concerned about the prospect of Maine shifting to one MaineCare Transportation broker – a move that was strongly discouraged by national experts in the 2021 report funded by Maine DHHS. Our distress is exacerbated by the fact that we hear concerns again and again about the practices of this for-profit company, ranging from a serious lack of language access services, persistent cancellations, frequent denials of service, and arduous approval processes.

At this moment, it's more important than ever that Maine invests our federal and state dollars in a way that delivers the best outcomes for our people, our communities, and our economy.

Thank you for listening to the perspectives of the Moving Maine Network.

Sincerely, Zoe Miller  
Executive Director