

April 23, 2025

Dear Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation,

My name is Alexis Guy and I am the Healthy Eating, Active Living Team Lead for Cumberland County. I am testifying to offer information on behalf of the Cumberland County Public Health Department (CCPHD) neither for nor against LD 1451: An Act to Strengthen Coordination of Community Transportation. At CCPHD, we envision a Cumberland County where communities are thriving; residents, organizations, and local governments connect and invest in collaborative actions; and every person has an equitable opportunity to live a healthy life. Part of our work is to provide the latest public health research and perspectives to decision makers as they work to create policies and practices that impact the health of the state, the county, our communities and ultimately, individuals.

In 2023, we completed a 4-year Cumberland County Community Health Improvement Plan that provides a vision for improving the health of people and communities in Cumberland County and reducing health inequities. The plan used an intensely collaborative process, resulting in prioritized strategies that address health at the individual and community level. Improving transportation access was identified as a key goal. Lack of transportation was named as a barrier to employment, acquiring housing, accessing out-of-school-time opportunities for youth, grocery shopping, and accessing healthcare services. It is a barrier that disproportionately impacts those in certain communities, including rural populations, older adults, immigrants, and people with low-income.

Best practices offered from both the state and federal levels to address transportation needs include coordination of existing resources and services. Both the 2023–2026 Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) Strategic Plan¹, developed by an interagency council led by the Federal Transit Administration² and MaineDOT's 2023 Strategic Transit Plan³ highlight interdepartmental coordination as an important step.

There are a variety of mechanisms and partners currently involved in addressing transportation needs for the populations highlighted above: public transit, non-emergency medical care funded by MaineCare, and transportation services through Maine DOE, DHHS, and DOL. With communication and collaboration, these systems can effectively support the individuals who experience transportation barriers in meeting their transportation needs.

Thank you for considering the impacts of state policies and practices on the health of our state and our communities.

Sincerely,
Alexis Guy

1. <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/2023-09/2023-2026-CCAM-Strategic-Plan.pdf>
2. <https://www.transit.dot.gov/coordinates-council-access-and-mobility>
3. <https://uploads.mainedotpima.com/2b79b3ac-8713-4a67-97ca-17c713b15495.pdf>