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Commissioner

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April 23, 2025

Senator Nangle, Chair  
Representative Crafts, Chair  
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Transportation  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 1359 – *Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Develop Practices Regarding Public Transit*

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, thank you for the opportunity to provide information on LD 1359 – *Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Develop Practices Regarding Public Transit*.

The bill instructs DOT to increase collaboration and coordination with the Department of Health and Human Services to improve public transit services between health care providers and consumers of the health care providers' services. This letter provides the Committee with information pertaining to MaineCare's existing transportation program for MaineCare members seeking health care services.

MaineCare contracts with Non-Emergency Transportation brokers to cover the state's eight transportation regions. The brokers in turn contract with transportation providers to provide rides for MaineCare members to their MaineCare-covered appointments. When possible, MaineCare members share rides to maximize the capacity of the driver and vehicle network. For MaineCare members who have access to bus systems, the NET brokers may purchase bus passes when cost effective. The NET program is the state's largest public transportation network, providing over 1.5 million rides per year across the state. See [www.maine.gov/dhhs/oms/member-resources/transportation](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oms/member-resources/transportation) for more information.

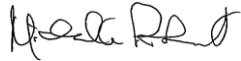
As the committee considers this bill's potential to increase the availability of public transportation to all Mainers, it is important to note that per federal OMB Circular A-87, Medicaid funds cannot be used to subsidize non-Medicaid services; in this case, that means that MaineCare cannot pay for rides outside the NET program, and therefore it is not currently possible for MaineCare members to share rides with non-MaineCare members under the NET program as a way to expand transportation capacity. For multiple years, DHHS and DOT have been closely monitoring any federal guidance that could support ride-sharing across programs, but as of now there is no federally-approved mechanism to split costs between Medicaid and non-Medicaid funding sources.

Should LD 1359 be enacted, we would look forward to continuing our existing collaboration and coordination with DOT. However, as the bill is deliberated, we would need more detail

regarding the expectations and duties of DHHS, as we may need funding to add a position to fulfill the requirements.

The Department would be happy to provide additional information and further discuss LD 1359. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions during your deliberation of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Probert", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michelle Probert

Director

Office of MaineCare Services

Maine Department of Health and Human Services