

To: Joint Committee on Transportation

From: Chad Heid, Chief Transportation Officer, GPMetro; Chair, PTAC

Date: April 23, 2025

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

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

I am Chair of the Public Transit Advisory Council (PTAC), which is a voluntary board established in statute to advise the State Legislature and the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) on public transit service in the state. I am providing this testimony in support of LD 1359, *Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Develop Practices Regarding Public Transit*. This year, the PTAC released its 4th biennial report on March 1st, and I provided a briefing to this Committee on March 25th that detailed the priority recommendations for increasing state funding and enhancing transparency in decision making.

The current Resolve language addresses the PTAC recommendations for enhancing transparency, along and increasing collaboration among State Agencies. That said, I request the Committee consider amending the Resolve during the work session to clarify the funding request, along with inclusion of the remaining PTAC recommendations.

Regarding funding, the PTAC prioritizes an increase in state funding to \$8.9million, matching the municipal funding levels that local transit providers were able to raise. Additionally, the PTAC seeks to establish a dedicated funding source that is permanent and not subject to non-transit allocations.

Other recommendations that should be considered for adoption include:

- Implementing a reporting system for transit projects that provide analysis on outcomes;
- Designating funds for mobility programs;
- Enhance and resource the GO Maine transportation program;
- Support volunteer driver needs;
- Encourage education and outreach programs to enhance the understanding for existing transit options.

The recommendations from the PTAC are in alignment with Maine's Climate Action Plan goal of increasing ridership by 5% annually, and with a focus on building toward a Maine in which all Mainers have access to regular and reliable transit options.



This Committee empowered the PTAC through prior legislation, and the outcomes of a nearly year long effort have broad support from the members, transit operators, and community stakeholders. Support for LD 1359 is the critical next step towards the implementation of systems and protocols that will prepare our communities for a future that includes transit services that can enhance accessibility, connectivity, and economic outcomes for all.

Thanks for your consideration,



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