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I have lived on the Pemaquid peninsula for over twenty years. My husband and I travel ten miles to Damariscotta for many services, including healthcare, dining, shopping, and entertainment. There are a number of other small villages on the Pemaquid peninsula that rely on Damariscotta for a variety of services. It's not uncommon for many of us to find that there are times when we travel to and from Damariscotta as frequently as once (or twice) a day.

In the summer, the local population explodes with day visitors, vacationers, and seasonal residents. The entire length of Main Street in Damariscotta, the primary access road from Route 1 to the peninsula, is clogged from June into October. Traffic backs up, parking lots fill while cars circle the municipal lot until a space opens, and pedestrians criss-cross the street, often without looking. Town is chaotic, the air smells of exhaust, and accidents are not unheard of when people are hot, frustrated, and impatient to get to their destination. A friend was seriously injured by a car several years ago while walking across Main St. in the middle of the day.

Traffic mitigation is much needed in our region. Fewer cars, safer roads for pedestrians and cyclists, and summertime jitneys from a few locations on the peninsula (the lighthouse, Pemaquid Beach and Ft. William Henry, Round Pond, and New Harbor) would help ease the heavy traffic and cut down on emissions.

This bill is an important step toward our climate goals while also helping to reign in the serious problem of seasonal traffic overload in many of our popular regions. Thank you for supporting this bill.