



Michael Burke, Board of Directors President

Sandy Buchanan, Executive Director

To the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

LD 1138 An Act to Reduce Pollution Associated with Transportation in Alignment with the State's Climate Action Plan

Testimony of Sandy Buchanan on behalf of Western Maine Transportation Services

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Sandy Buchanan and I am the Executive Director for Western Maine Transportation Services (WMTS). I previously acted as President for Maine Transit Association (MTA), and currently serve on the Public Transit Advisory Committee (PTAC). I am here today to express my support for LD 1138 and share with you the importance of this bill in reducing emissions, and removing transportation barriers for the communities WMTS serves.

WMTS provides public transit throughout the rural areas of Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties, and for the Cities of Bath and Brunswick; and we are often the only option available for trips to the Lewiston-Auburn urban area. Speaking as a person residing in a rural area, I can say how important expanded transit services are to those who cannot or chose not to drive is. Supporting and advocating expanded use of public transit allows more access to rural residents for employment opportunities, critical medical care including dialysis and cancer treatment, and access to groceries and other basic needs. Better use of public transit increases safety, reduces congestion and reduces carbon emissions and dependency on fossil fuels.

Investing in clean transportation options like more frequent and reliable transit and better walking and biking infrastructure will improve safety, protect our health, and support local economic growth.

- Transportation contributes more to climate pollution than any other sector in Maine. Reducing transportation pollution is “Plan A” in Maine’s Climate Action Plan, but we are not making the progress we need to hit our climate goals.
- Building more roads and adding vehicle lanes increases demand and creates more traffic and associated emissions. We need to measure the climate impacts of new transportation projects and offset any projected increases in greenhouse gas emissions by investing in projects that reduce emissions in alignment with Maine’s established climate goals.



- If climate change is not part of transportation planning, our limited taxpayer funds will go to more expensive, more polluting projects that increase traffic and make roads more dangerous.
- Climate smart projects like public transit and walkable communities are not just good for our climate- these proven tools can boost local economies, increase access to essential goods and services, reduce air pollution, improve community safety, and reduce transportation costs for Maine residents.

For these reasons, I encourage you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1138. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Sandy Buchanan

WMTS Executive Director