



Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine
The unified voice for Maine's community behavioral health providers

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Testimony in Support of
An Act to Improve Nonemergency MaineCare Transportation – LD 1835

May 9, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Adam Bloom-Paicopolos. I am a resident of Wells and am proud to serve as the Executive Director of the Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine (the Alliance). The Alliance is the statewide association representing Maine's community-based behavioral health agencies who provide mental health and substance use services to over 80,000 children, adults, and families annually. The Alliance advocates for the implementation of sound policies and evidence-based practices that serve to enhance the quality and effectiveness of our behavioral health system.

On behalf of the Alliance, I am here today to speak in support of LD 1835, "An Act to Improve Nonemergency MaineCare Transportation."

Community behavioral health organizations in Maine are deeply committed to increasing access to care, and we know that transportation is critical factor for individuals and families to get the support they need. For the thousands of Mainers our members serve— many of which reside in rural areas— transportation insecurity is a significant barrier that often prevents them from accessing vital services. When individuals cannot attend therapy appointments, access medication management, or get to group programming due to lack of reliable transportation, their health outcomes suffer.

In 2023, Maine spent over \$200 million on community transportation. Yet, a recent survey found that 40% of Maine adults experience transportation insecurity. LD 1451 represents a smart, strategic step toward fixing that gap by establishing an ombudsman program, increasing awareness and participation through regional advisory committees, and establishing an online MaineCare transportation dashboard. The Alliance strongly supports this legislation to enhance nonemergency MaineCare transportation in Maine. For community behavioral health providers, more transportation means fewer missed appointments, greater continuity of care, and better outcomes for the individuals and families we serve.

Maine's behavioral health system is already in crisis, with long waitlists, workforce shortages, and inadequate reimbursement rates to maintain access to services. Transportation should not be an additional barrier for Mainers accessing lifesaving care. LD 1835 gives Maine the tools to move forward with a system that is more accessible, community-driven, and sustainable. **I respectfully urge the Committee to support LD 1835 and help Maine take a meaningful step towards ensuring that no one is prevented from accessing care simply because they can't get there.**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony this afternoon. I would be happy to answer any questions from the Committee.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam Bloom-Paicopolos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Adam Bloom-Paicopolos, MPP
Executive Director