



## MISSION STATEMENT

ADVOCATE for investments in public transportation improvements throughout the state of Maine, PROMOTE the value of public transportation statewide, and SERVE as a resource for members to help them thrive.

### **Testimony in Support of LD1835: An Act to Improve Nonemergency MaineCare Transportation Presented to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services**

Good morning Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services.

My name is Tom Reinauer and I am the Transportation Director at York County Community Action, and current President of the Maine Transit Association. The Association is testifying in support of LD 1835.

The MTA is a nonprofit association of 19 transit providers and supporting agencies throughout Maine, covering both rural and urban areas. Last year, our members provided 5.2 million passenger trips, which represents 84% of all public transportation service provided in Maine.

We operate a variety of transportation services, which are essential to Maine communities, the economy, and residents – particularly for those without access to transportation, such as older adults and people with disabilities. Each day, we provide transportation for Mainers to access work, education, health care, grocery shopping and other vital services.

Access to reliable transportation is a cornerstone of healthcare equity, ensuring that MaineCare recipients—many of whom are elderly, disabled, or living in rural communities—can reach essential medical appointments without unnecessary hardship.

For too long, MaineCare transportation services have lacked the transparency, accountability, and oversight necessary to guarantee timely and efficient travel for patients in need. LD1835 offers practical solutions that will strengthen oversight through a public dashboard, incident tracking, and regional advisory committees that ensure local voices are heard. Additionally, the introduction of an ombudsman program will provide much-needed assistance to individuals navigating transportation challenges. These measures will help prevent delays, miscommunications, and service failures that prevent clients from accessing their appointments.

Many of our Association members provide MaineCare transportation services through regional brokers, and we welcome the opportunity to have our service metrics included in a public dashboard. Indeed, public transportation providers are very accustomed to similar public data platforms, particularly the National Transit Database (or NTD). The NTD is a publicly-available database, and reporting is required of every provider in the United States that receives Federal funding – rural and urban alike. This information includes ridership figures, operating costs, safety reporting, and also metrics such as cost per passenger mile and cost per passenger trip. The information is widely used for tracking performance measures and as metrics in funding formulas.

All of the information for a MaineCare transportation dashboard is data which is already required in the current broker contracts, and is currently being provided to the Department and also placed into a monthly dashboard. This Bill does not require the NET brokers to conduct any additional data collection or develop new reporting metrics, it simply would create a public space where the information is readily available to transportation stakeholders and MaineCare members.

By passing LD1835, Maine has an opportunity to set a new standard for nonemergency medical transportation—one that prioritizes efficiency, accountability, and patient dignity. We urge you to support this bill and take a necessary step toward improving healthcare access for MaineCare recipients.

Thank you very much, and I'd be happy to answer any questions.