

May 9, 2025

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

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of LD 1835, “An Act to Improve Nonemergency MaineCare Transportation.” This bill is a vital and timely measure to ensure that our MaineCare transportation system works better for everyone who relies on it.

Transportation plays a central role in health and well-being. No matter who you are or where you live, safe, reliable transportation is critical to accessing health care, healthy food, and social supports. Maine’s health care system depends on patients being able to get to medical appointments on time—and when they can’t, the consequences are costly for individuals and providers alike. Missed appointments can lead to delayed care, worsening health conditions, and increased emergency room use. For medical providers, no-shows result in lost revenue and missed opportunities to treat others.

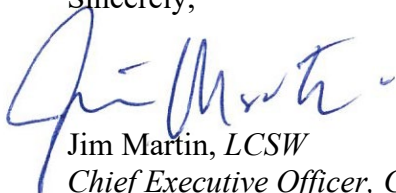
MaineCare’s Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) program, overseen by the Office of MaineCare Services (OMS), plays a key role in supporting access to care. Each year, MaineCare NET provides over one million rides for preventive services, cancer treatment, dialysis, substance use disorder recovery, and school-based services for children with special needs. Studies show that for every \$1 spent on nonemergency Medicaid transportation, \$11 in healthcare costs are avoided—a return on investment that we cannot afford to ignore.

However, MaineCare NET needs a tune-up. Many members report frustration with inconsistent service and difficulty navigating the system. At the same time, OMS lacks sufficient resources to fully oversee its contracts with regional transportation brokers. LD 1835 addresses these issues directly and will help improve the system.

We must ensure MaineCare NET is firing on all cylinders. LD 1835 is a practical, cost-effective way to improve efficiency, transparency, and customer satisfaction in Maine’s largest public transportation program. Let’s build a system that doesn’t leave anyone behind.

I would be happy to answer any questions you have and make myself available if that would be helpful.

Sincerely,



Jim Martin, LCSW
Chief Executive Officer, Community Concepts