



Natural Resources Council of Maine

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Testimony in Support of LD 1451, An Act to Strengthen Coordination of Community Transportation

To the Committee on Transportation
by Josh Caldwell, Climate and Clean Energy Policy Advocate for NRCM
April 23, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Committee on Transportation, my name is Josh Caldwell, and I am here on behalf of the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) in support of LD 1451, An Act to Strengthen Coordination of Community Transportation. NRCM is Maine's leading nonpartisan membership organization dedicated to protecting Maine's environment, with nearly 20,000 supporters statewide and beyond.

I am the Vice Chair of the Public Transit Advisory Council (PTAC), which is a voluntary board established in statute to advise the State Legislature and the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) on public transit service in the state. This year, the PTAC released its 4th biennial report on March 1st, which you all received a briefing on a few weeks ago¹.

One of the recommendations within that report is to improve coordination across state agencies by establishing a mobility management (a strategy that connects people with the transportation that best meets their needs) approach stewarded by an interagency coordinating council and a full-time staff position in state government to oversee interagency transportation coordination. LD 1451 seeks to bring that recommendation to life with proven strategies recommended by federal and state plans.

In fact, increasing interagency coordination has been a recommendation in each of the 4 PTAC reports since 2019. We've seen some progress on that front through the hard work of organizations like the Moving Maine Network and the state and federal planning processes

¹ Public Transit Advisory Council, March 1 2025, 2025 Biennial Report to Legislature,
<https://www.maine.gov/mdot/transit/ptac/>

associated with the Maine State Transit Plan² and the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility³.

What is needed now is an actionable next step to implement the strategies recommended by a chorus of transit operators, users, and experts. LD 1451 is that next step. Coordinating state agencies that provide needed rides will ensure that our tax dollars are being spent in the most efficient manner possible while increasing the quality and quantity of rides to get Mainers where they need to go, whether that's a ride to work, to the grocery store, to a medical appointment, or to any number of community services and destinations.

LD 1451 is an appropriate and timely answer to an issue that has been widely recognized for many years. Thank you for your consideration, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

² Maine Department of Transportation, 2023, *Working to Move Maine: MaineDOT's Family of Plans*, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/27763afe326645c285cb1d726ee68cae>

³ Federal Transit Administration, 2022, 2023–2026 Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility Strategic Plan, <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/access/ccam/about/2023-2026-coordinating-council-access-and-mobility>