



MAINE AFL-CIO

A Union of Unions Standing for Maine Workers

21 Gabriel Drive, Augusta, Maine 04330

(207) 622-9675

Visit our website: www.maineaflcio.org



President
Cynthia Phinney

Vice President
Grant Provost

Secretary Treasurer
Doug Born

Testimony of Adam Goode, Maine AFL-CIO Legislative & Political Director, In Support of LD 1451, "An Act to Strengthen Coordination of Community Transportation"

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Adam Goode. I'm the Legislative and Political Director of the Maine AFL-CIO. We represent 40,000 working people in the state of Maine. We work to improve the lives and working conditions of our members and all working people. We testify in support of LD 1451.

Our support for this bill comes from three avenues. First, we represent workers who work in the transportation sector, including members of the Amalgamated Transportation Union, Local 714 and drivers at KVCAP who are organized with the International Association of Machinists, S-89. Those workers do difficult work, providing necessary services under increasingly dangerous circumstances. Second, unions in Maine have been developing a vision to address accelerating climate change and deepening inequality by passing legislation to support thousands of new union jobs in the clean energy sector. We know that public transportation is one tool to address climate change. Third, working class people count on public transportation to get to and from work, to buy groceries and engage in their community. Due to short staffing, likely connected to working conditions and funding shortages, the public bus in the Bangor area has cut their Saturday service, leaving no bus available at all on the weekends.

We know that 40% of Maine adults experience transportation insecurity, the inability to access needed services or destinations comfortably, conveniently, and affordably. Strengthening coordination using national best practices will help transit workers. The bill will enable Maine to make more efficient use of current resources and to leverage additional federal funding for public and community transportation that is currently being "left on the table". Better use of funding and more access to funds is one tool that will help improve services and improve wages and working conditions for transit workers.

We close by reminding you that in recent years there has been a nationwide increase in violent attacks towards transit workers themselves and on transit in general.^{1,2} Both transit users and workers have to worry about being verbally, physically or even sexually assaulted when they are doing their job. In addition to concerns about violence in Maine workplaces, there have been consistent national news stories about violent situations on public transit, including stabbings³, operators being punched, spit on, robbed and verbal assaults.

Unions are all about safety for riders and workers, and dangerous workplaces result in lost time, staffing challenges and negative impacts on employee recruitment and retention. Transit systems also lose revenue when a bus has to divert or pause a regular route to deal with an incident.⁴

Printed In House with Union Labor

¹<https://www.cbsnews.com/chicago/news/union-violence-cta-buses-driver-shortage/>

²<https://www.ktnv.com/news/renewed-attention-for-transit-police-after-another-incident-on-board-rtc-bus>

³<https://www.richmondsentinel.ca/article-detail/33624/transit-association-says-more-police-security-needed-on-city-buses-trains>

⁴<https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/code-blue-transit-union-says-its-reviewing-up-to-10-staff-assault-cases-each-month>

We share this information to remind you of the challenges both workers and riders face and to recognize that there are major unmet needs that would benefit from coordination of funding.