



## Environmental Priorities Coalition

### **Testimony in support of LD1138, *An Act to Reduce Pollution Associated with Transportation in Alignment with the State's Climate Action Plan***

**May 1, 2025**

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts and distinguished member of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Cathy Breen. I am here today to speak on behalf of the Environmental Priorities Coalition (EPC), an inclusive statewide alliance of 39 conservation, climate action, and public health organizations that is marking its 20th anniversary this year. Each year we collectively identify a slate of policy priorities to act on the climate crisis, further environmental justice, protect land, water, and wildlife, and cultivate healthy Maine communities. This is a lengthy and rigorous process that takes place over the summer and fall before each legislative session. For this current session, the EPC has prioritized LD1138, *An Act to Reduce Pollution Associated with Transportation in Alignment with the State's Climate Action Plan*, so I am speaking in support of this bill.

Many of us in the EPC have participated in the development and implementation of Maine's climate action plans, the most recent of which is *Maine Won't Wait, 2.0*.<sup>1</sup> Whether joining in the work of various Climate Council Working Groups, advocating for legislation and investments to implement recommendations, or connecting our communities with state programs and resources that help prepare for severe storms and conditions that are on the horizon, EPC members are deeply engaged in meeting the climate crisis all across Maine. And we are well aware that transportation contributes more to climate pollution than any other sector in Maine. Reducing transportation pollution is "Plan A" in Maine's Climate Action Plan, but we are quite far from making the progress we need to hit our climate goals.

Investing in cleaner transportation options like robust and reliable transit and safe walking and biking paths will not only help reduce gas-powered vehicle miles, it will improve public health outcomes and boost local economies. In addition, continuing the post-World War II system of building more and more roads to accommodate more and more cars without offsetting that impact is simply not sustainable. Maine taxpayers deserve better.

Connecting the state's short- and long-term transportation plans to the state's climate goals simply makes common sense. We're using our climate goals to reduce greenhouse gas

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.maine.gov/climateplan/sites/maine.gov.climateplan/files/2024-11/MWW\\_2024\\_Book\\_112124.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/climateplan/sites/maine.gov.climateplan/files/2024-11/MWW_2024_Book_112124.pdf)

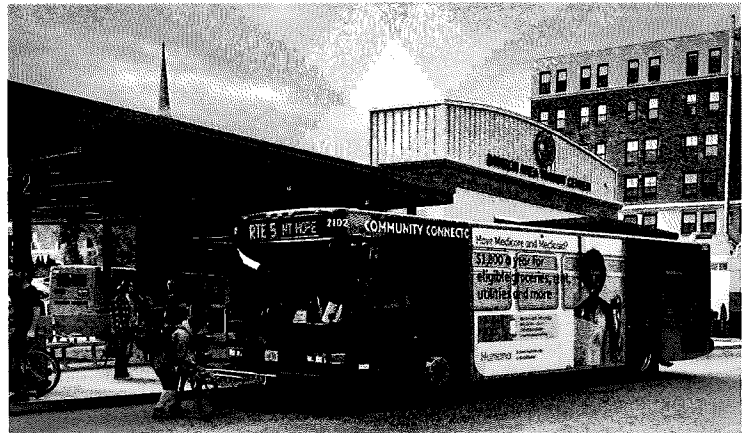
emissions in residential heating and cooling, in land use planning, in building materials and codes, and in other policy arenas. Why should transportation - just one aspect of state government - be exempt from these expectations? If climate change is not part of transportation planning, our limited taxpayer funds will go to more expensive, more polluting projects that increase traffic and make roads more dangerous. On behalf of the 39 members of the EPC, I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD1139.

# CUT POLLUTION BY INCREASING CLEAN TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Ensure limited transportation funding delivers the greatest benefit for Maine families, businesses, and the environment.

## Transportation emissions are the largest source of climate pollution in Maine.

- Right now, transportation planning isn't required to consider climate pollution, limiting investment in healthier, safer options for Mainers to get around.
- As Maine grows and develops, it is more important than ever that state transportation planners take climate change into consideration when reviewing and approving transportation projects.
- Investing in clean transportation options like more frequent and reliable transit and safer streets will improve safety, protect our health, and support local economic growth.



(City of Bangor)

## Maine's current transportation planning process does not reflect our state's climate goals.

- If climate change is not part of transportation planning, our limited taxpayer funds will go to more expensive, more polluting projects that can increase traffic and make roads more dangerous.
- Traffic and pollution from our roads disproportionately impacts low-income and disadvantaged communities. Reducing the climate impact of our transportation system will give people healthier, more affordable options while reducing harmful air pollution that contributes to asthma and other harmful health impacts.
- Greenhouse gas emissions targets for our statewide transportation system will ensure that we're addressing the largest source of climate pollution in Maine.

## It's time to plan for a smarter, cleaner transportation future.



(Deb Dawson Photography)

- This bill would ensure that new proposed transportation projects will have to model long-term climate impacts.
- Projects that are not aligned with our state climate action plan can be adjusted in order to move forward.
- Aligning transportation planning with climate goals will create economic, health, safety, and equity benefits by encouraging more investment in public transportation and safer streets across the state.

**Embrace smart climate planning. Increase clean transportation for all.**



# Environmental Priorities Coalition

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COALITION  
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Conservation  
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Science for a healthy planet and safer world

