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Maine Community Action Partnership Supports LD 17 Resolve, To Provide Rural Nonmedical Transportation Services to the Elderly and Adults with Disabilities Receiving Home and Community Benefits under the MaineCare Program

February 10, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, ladies and gentlemen of the Joint Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Megan Hannan, Executive Director of Maine Community Action Partnership, and we support LD 17, A Resolve, To Provide Rural Nonmedical Transportation Services to the Elderly and Adults with Disabilities Receiving Home and Community Benefits under the MaineCare Program. MeCAP is the association of the ten Community Action Agencies in Maine, two of which are transportation brokers and six are regional transportation providers; all provide transportation older adults and people with disabilities. We know firsthand the need for nonmedical transit services for Elder and Adults with Disabilities is high, which is why we support LD17.

Addressing non-medical transit needs for those who have no ability to transport themselves can help address issues such as social isolation, poor nutrition and the related health issues that arise when isolated Elders or Adults with Disabilities cannot regularly shop for groceries or prescription medication.

Current Non-emergency Medical Transportation, arranged by one of three brokers, is a system that has finite capacity and is designed to respond to MaineCare member's medical needs. We believe that introducing a significant volume of non-medical trip requests into the current NEMT system may strain the system, and may disrupt the reliable and predictable transportation services that chronically ill MaineCare members rely on - those who use dialysis services or chemotherapy, for example.

Therefore, if we move forward with this bill, we recommend implementing this service by directly engaging the current designated Regional Transit Providers, as this would be the most efficient and cost effective way to implement this 18 month pilot program.

I am happy to answer any questions that I can, now or in the work session.

Respectfully Submitted,

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