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LINCOLN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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February 17, 2021

Senator Claxton, Co-Chair  
Representative Meyer, Co-Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0100

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

I am writing in **support** of 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.

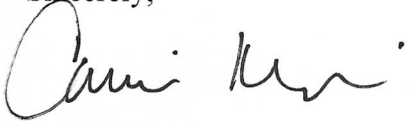
In 2016, Lincoln County participated in a Shared Community Health Needs Assessment and the lack of public transportation was identified as one of the leading factors that contributed to poor health outcomes in our towns. In addition, the existing private transportation network had major coverage inequalities across the county. Our Board of County Commissioners have had many conversations in which they voiced their concerns about this topic.

Although Lincoln County does not have the resources to identify and implement a solution that would meet the demand, we have supported various projects to start addressing the issue. Funding towards a seasonal trolley service that would connect a local Amtrak station to locations along our peninsulas was provided by the county, but ended when Amtrak discontinued the service. In our 2020 and 2021 budget, we allocated funding to Mid-Coast Connector to study ways their regional bus service could be expanded, possibly between Rockland and Bath, to provide options to our county. This funding was unanimously supported by our Budget Advisory Committee each year.

Although our focus has been to meet our local needs, this is a statewide challenge that plagues all counties in some manner. We are not meeting the basic needs of many of our most vulnerable citizens. I fully support a pilot project to start trying the solutions identified, and I hope Lincoln County is chosen as the test market. I hope you will agree that the problem will not go away on its own and that it is time to find a solution to this challenge.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carrie Kipfer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a distinct "K".

Carrie Kipfer  
Lincoln County Administrator

CC: Senator Chloe Maxmin  
Lincoln County Commissioners