

Intended to be submitted or read at a public hearing for your bill LD 976 "Resolve, to Restore Accessible Public Transportation to Swan Island in Perkins Township" scheduled for Monday, Mar. 24, 2025 at 1:00PM.

My Name is Michala White, I grew up with Swan Island as my home. My Grandfather, Parker Blen was caretaker and he and my Grandmother lived on the Island in the Dunbar-Blen staff house.

My Grandmother took me in at four months old and raised me until my Grandfather's retirement in the early 1970's. It was an idyllic place to live, both my Grandparents loved it as their own.

When I grew up and started visiting again summers, I was so excited to see "Swanee" the green flat-bottomed boat that Grampie used as a ferry to go back and forth from the Island to the mainland still in use. Eventually Swanee was replaced by a large steel ferry, to transport people going to the Island for day trips and overnights. My Grandfather had a scow that he used for larger trips with vehicles. I have photos from the 1960's and before of Swanee and the scow.

It is my understanding that a person needs to have a captain's license to ferry people across the short distance from the mainland to the landing on Swan Island, and the State of Maine did not have anyone with a Captain's license, so the State shut down transportation to the Island. I have been unable to go back since and although I am aware I can take my own transportation over I do not feel confident enough in my skills to do that.

Personally, I, and I am sure many others would benefit greatly by having a way over, a smaller boat is acceptable, it wouldn't need to be that large ferry for transporting a handful of people. I think the State of Maine would also benefit from having transportation, visitor information and just knowing who is over there.

Please reconsider providing transportation to Swan Island, it has been used for educational purposes, camping opportunities, boy scout sleepovers and day trips for decades, what a shame to let that history pass.

Thank you for listening to my thoughts on the subject, as you can imagine I am quite passionate about this as I have been unable to share my 'home' with friends and family for a few years now.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Michala White

