



MISSION STATEMENT

ADVOCATE for investments in public transportation improvements throughout the state of Maine, PROMOTE the value of public transportation statewide, and SERVE as a resource for members to help them thrive.

Testimony in support of LD 1451, April 23, 2025.

Good afternoon Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation:

My name is Tom Reinauer and I am the Transportation Director at York County Community Action, and current President of the Maine Transit Association. The Association is testifying in support of LD 1451.

The MTA is a nonprofit association of 19 transit providers and supporting agencies throughout Maine, covering both rural and urban areas. Last year, our members provided 5.2 million passenger trips, which represents 84% of all public transportation service provided in Maine.

We operate a variety of transportation services, which are essential to Maine communities, the economy, and residents – particularly for those without access to transportation, such as older adults and people with disabilities. Each day, we provide transportation for Mainers to access work, education, health care, grocery shopping and other vital services.

LD 1451 would strengthen coordination between funding agencies and make more efficient use of current resources. Maine spends about \$206 million each year on community transportation through several different departments, and better coordination between these departments will improve services for our clients, reduce administrative burden and save money. For residents looking for help with transportation, navigating the available options can be a very daunting task, with several different calls needed prior to finding the right fit for the trip they need. Better coordination between agencies and providers is needed to support our clients.

Providers have to contend with several different requirements for similar types of service depending on the state agency administering the program. For example, we have different driver background check requirements for contracts – requiring us to conduct two separate checks, even though one is stricter than the other. There are also different driver training requirements depending on the funding source and contract, and several different trip reimbursement methods and reimbursement rates for providing our services.

On the Federal level, both the Federal Transit Administration and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services encourage coordination and partnerships between state agencies which fund transportation. In guidance provided in 2024, they state that coordination is key to ensuring individuals can reach the medical and other services they need.

Several states, including New Hampshire, have successfully implemented similar strategies – a statewide coordinating council and a regional mobility managers program. Improving coordination between agencies is also the #1 recommendation from MaineDOT’s State Transit Plan, completed in 2023.

The concept of mobility management looks beyond just a single transportation service or solution, and focuses on a “family of services” philosophy that can offer a range of transportation options to meet wide array of community demographics and needs.

Mobility management begins with a community vision in which the entire transportation network including public transit, private operators, and volunteer driving programs work together with customers and stakeholders to deliver coordinated transportation options that best meet regional and community needs.

We urge you to support LD 1451, and improve coordination of transportation services for Maine residents.

Thank you very much, and I’d be happy to answer any questions.