



Testimony in Support of LD 1451 – An Act to Strengthen Coordination of Community Transportation

Provided by: Sherry Wood
April 17, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation,

My name is Sherry Wood, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of SKILLS, Inc., a nonprofit organization serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and/or Autism in central Maine. We write in strong support of LD 1451, because transportation is fundamental to community inclusion, personal growth, and independence, values at the heart of our mission.

SKILLS provides a wide range of individualized supports, including Community Support programs, Community Integration services, Residential Supports, and employment readiness opportunities. With locations in Pittsfield, Skowhegan, and Hinckley, we help individuals connect with their communities, pursue meaningful goals, and live independently in the places they call home. Our services include career planning, a Job Club, and the launch of pre-employment and driver's education pilot programs, which reflect our commitment to supporting every person's right to choose how they live, learn, and work.

For the people we serve, transportation is not optional, it is a lifeline. It determines whether someone can attend a job interview, get to a medical appointment, or participate in a class or community event. Yet in many of the communities we serve, public transportation is either limited or unavailable. Most of our program participants do not drive, and while our Direct Support Professionals provide some transportation, the needs can outpace capacity.

LD 1451 offers a practical and forward-thinking path forward. By establishing regional Mobility Management Hubs and strengthening interagency coordination, this bill helps create a transportation system that is flexible, efficient, and centered on the needs of the people it serves. It allows providers like SKILLS to partner with others in our region to identify service gaps, align resources, and design solutions that work for rural

communities and for individuals with disabilities.

This bill reflects how we approach our work every day: through collaboration, respect, and a focus on helping each person thrive. It recognizes that transportation provides access, opportunity, and full participation in community life.

On behalf of SKILLS, Inc. and the individuals and families we serve across central Maine, I respectfully encourage your support for LD 1451.

Sincerely,

Sherry Wood, Community Supports Assistant Manager

SKILLS, Inc.