



Testimony of Sandy Buchanan

To the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation Funding

In Support of Additional Funding for Public Transportation

October 26, 2019

Senator Diamond, Representative McLean, and members of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation Funding (BRC), my name is Sandy Buchanan and I am the General Manager for Western Maine Transportation Services (WMTS). I am here today in my capacity as the President for the Maine Transit Association (MTA), of which WMTS is a member.

WMTS is the regional transportation provider serving Androscoggin, Oxford, Franklin, and part of Cumberland counties. We provide a variety of services to the residents of the region, including regular bus routes such as the Mountain Explorer serving the Bethel region and the Brunswick Explorer serving the Town of Brunswick, the GreenLine serving the Route #4 corridor between Farmington and Lewiston~ Auburn, and on demand rides for health care and other essential needs.

MTA is a professional association providing leadership, resources, support, and technical assistance to transit agencies throughout Maine. Our members provide a variety of services including regularly scheduled local and inter-city bus service, inter-city commuter programs, and ferry service. When we speak of "transit," we are referring to transportation services available to the general public. In addition to over the road services, our membership includes the Casco Bay Lines, which provides regular service to 7 islands in Casco Bay. These services are essential to those without regular access to transportation, such as seniors and the disabled.

My goal today is to give you a general overview of public transportation in Maine, who it is serving, where, and how it is currently funded. I will also discuss areas where service is falling short of the need and additional funding is desperately needed.

Intro to Public Transportation in Maine

Maine has a network of public transportation providers serving every corner of the state. They include regular bus service in urban areas provided by METRO, South Portland Bus, ShuttleBus Zoom, citylink, and the Bangor Community Connector. It also includes 8 regional transit providers serving every corner of the state providing a mix of defined route bus service such as the Kennebec Explorer and Lakes Region Explorer and on demand services. For example, my agency, WMTS, provides the Mountain Explorer bus route serving the Bethel area, including Sunday River, and also does flex-route and on demand rides for children in the child welfare system, seniors, and non-emergency transportation for MaineCare recipients, employees and individuals continuing their educations. Most other regional providers have a similar mix.

A variety of funding sources support this work. The most fundamental is federal transit funding which goes to all major providers in the state. Federal transit funds help cover a portion of both operating and capital expenses and total over \$35M a year (summary attached). The state often provides the local match (20%) required for federally funded bus purchases. The second big piece is Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT), which totals \$60M a year, with about 2/3rds coming from the federal government and the balance from the state. NEMT is operated by brokers serving 8 regions around the state. They contract with regional providers like WMTS, taxis and other providers to serve MaineCare members without access to transportation.

The state provides smaller amounts of assistance in 3 areas. First, DHHS commits funding to provide transportation for children in the child welfare system. I have a request pending to DHHS for the amount of those services. Second, a portion of the Federal Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) is set aside for transportation. It amounted to \$1.17M in FFY18. Finally, the state provides \$1.4M a year in direct operating support to providers through the Multi-Modal Fund for transit. The commitment of only \$1 per capita in direct support places Maine 43rd in the country (source: AASHTO). The average state spends \$50 per capita. We are requesting that this Commission recommend steps to increase state support.

Finally, regional providers and defined route bus services both receive support from municipalities, area businesses, and donations.

Operating and Capital Shortfalls for Transit

Because of the limited state funding, Maine is significantly underinvesting in both capital and operating support for public transportation.

In 2015, Maine DOT prepared the 2025 Maine DOT Transit Strategic Plan (Full plan here - <https://www.maine.gov/mdot/planning/strategictransitplan/>). The Plan concluded that Maine is only serving 17% of the need for public transportation. Think about that, less than 1 in 5 rides. These are Maine residents who don't have a reliable way to travel to work, to get health care, to shop or access basic services. Expanding public transportation will improve their lives and strengthen Maine's

economy. The Plan concluded it would require \$14 million a year just to reach the modest goal of providing 20% of the unmet transportation need in Maine. In reality, an investment at that level would allow us to surpass the 20% goal because this general operation support would allow providers to expand services for all populations, not just the targeted groups served by dedicated funding streams.

At the first meeting of this Commission, Maine DOT shared with you a PowerPoint presentation regarding department finances. One touched on public transportation and I've attached it to my testimony. What's worth noting is the Maine DOT has identified a \$6M shortfall in capital needs for public transportation. Maine does use a portion of each year's transportation bond for alternate modes (about 20%), but this shortfall persists even after using some of those funds to match federal funds for bus purchases.

Other Unmet Transit Needs

The Transit Strategic Plan is limited to over the road public transportation. Two significant omissions are ferry services and community efforts to organize rides.

Maine of course has a Ferry Service providing regular transportation to a handful of islands and it receives regular state support. I am not that familiar with their operations. What I am familiar with are the challenges of the Casco Bay Lines, which provides ferry service to several islands in Casco Bay, as the name implies, Casco Bay Lines receives regular federal funding, but does not receive regular state support. The state has, to its credit, occasionally assisted with capital needs, but Casco Bay could benefit from increased state support.

A number of communities in Maine have put together volunteer driver networks. These can be a godsend for local residents, especially seniors and the disabled, who have no access to transportation. MTA believes the state should support such networks. They are one cost effective part of any comprehensive transportation solution. There are groups working in many communities around the state, but they could use assistance in best practices and in access to scheduling software. Such assistance will also encourage additional communities to offer ride share services.

How Providers Would Utilize Additional Funding

One question that transit providers often receive from legislators is how would you utilize additional funding? That's a fair question and one we'd like to answer. Attached to my testimony is a packet of responses from providers answering exactly that question. They were asked to indicate which additional services they would provide given \$1 million in new funding. As you can see, there is no shortage of good ideas awaiting a boost from the state.

Here are a few examples:

1. Coastal Enterprises would, among other things, expand its commuter program with the Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor.
2. One thing Downeast Community Partners in Washing and Hancock Counties would do is expand services for those in recovery, including travel to Counseling appointments, 12 step meetings, and other non-medical appointments.
3. WMTS would implement more of our strategic plan (which can be viewed at www.wmtsbus.org); including expanding routes to better serve all our clients.
4. York County Community Action Corporation would implement an Eldercare service for seniors without access to transportation and expand the WAVE (Wheels to Access, Vocation and Education) to address workforce needs.

The packet also includes letters of support from municipalities and Sugarloaf Mtn Corp.

LD 1258, An Act To Increase Access to Transportation for Workforce and Other Essential Transportation Needs

This year Rep. Betty Ann Sheats sponsored a transit funding bill, LD 1258, *An Act To Increase Access to Transportation for Workforce and Other Essential Transportation Needs*. It received unanimous support in the Transportation Committee, was approved without objection by both the House and Senate and now sits on the Appropriations Table. It serves as a model for the way additional investments in public transportation can be utilized.

LD 1258 will increase the capacity of existing transportation providers and encourage the creation or expansion of volunteer driver networks.

As amended by the Transportation Committee, LD 1258 will:

1. Increase Maine DOT funding for public transportation to approach the 20% service goal (a \$9.5 million a year increase). These funds will be distributed by the same formula as existing state public transportation funding:
 - a. 50% to urban areas following the FTA formula
 - b. 50% to rural areas following the federal 5311 program standards, which take into account:
 1. The % of senior residents
 2. Overall population
 3. Square miles served
2. Dedicate funding (\$500,000 year) to support and expand local volunteer driver networks. Maine DOT will administer these funds and work with local networks.

The Committee Amendment is attached and calls for a \$10 million dollar a year investment. While we would like to see that level of investment, any significant increase in the state's current direct investment of only \$1.4M a year into multi-modal networks would be put to good use and make a real difference.

Constitutional Limits on Use of Some DOT Funds for Transit

One challenge to properly funding public transportation and alternate modes is ambiguity created by the Maine Constitution. Article IX, Section 9 requires that motor fuel and vehicle registration revenues be used for Maine's "highways and bridges." Depending on how you read that, it could be argued that it prohibits spending those revenues on transit.

MTA believes that is an overly narrow reading of the Constitution. Fuel and license revenues are used for a number of expenditures related to, but not expressly on, roads and bridges. These include the Ferry Service, and until early in the last administration, operating support for municipal transit services. The transit funding source was changed to the Multi-Modal Fund for Transit which derives from the auto rental sales tax, which is not subject to the Constitutional limit.

At the end of the day, we understand there is a significant shortfall in state investment in highways and bridges. The larger issue is that we need new state investment in public transportation, regardless of the source.

Request of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation Funding

MTA's request to this Commission is simple. When you make your recommendations, include public transportation. It is an essential part of the state's transportation system and deserves greater state attention and support than it has been receiving. A good first step would be to identify a funding source and recommend implementing the plan set forth in Rep. Sheats' legislation, LD 1258.

Thank you for your time and attention today. I would be happy to take any questions.

Revised 4/23/19

To: All Transportation Providers and Metropolitan Planning Organizations
From: Barble-Jo Lord, Transportation Planning Analyst, Multimodal Planning Division
Date: April 23, 2019
Subject: Federal Allocation for FFY2019 - Full Apportionment (UPDATED 04/23/2019*)

This memorandum depicts the full apportionment of the FY2019 Federal allocation for public transportation programs. These are excerpts from the FY2019 Supplemental Apportionment Notice and Tables.

<u>Program</u>	<u>FY2019 Federal Funds Allocated</u>
Section 5303, Metropolitan Planning Program	\$457,912
Section 5304, State Planning Program	\$119,571
Section 5307, Urbanized Area - Portland UZA	\$10,471,782*
Section 5307, Urbanized Area - Small Urban	\$2,548,575*
Section 5310, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals With Disabilities - Rural	\$679,427
Section 5310, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals With Disabilities - Small Urban	\$288,224
Section 5310, Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals With Disabilities - Portland UZA	\$204,067
Section 5311, Rural Area Formula Apportionments	\$8,063,262
Section 5311(b)(3) Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)	\$158,913
Section 5337, State of Good Repair - Portland UZA	\$8,633,375
Section 5339, Bus and Bus Facilities Formula - Statewide National Distribution	\$3,500,000
Section 5339, Bus and Bus Facilities Formula - Small Urban	\$233,641
Section 5339, Bus and Bus Facilities Formula - Portland UZA	\$280,128
Small Transit Intensive Cities**	\$523,823**
Total Allocation	\$35,479,954

<u>State Funds</u>	<u>State Funds FY2020</u>
Anticipated Full Apportionment of Multi-Modal Transit Account Funds	\$1,147,845

Please contact Barble-Jo Lord at 624-3026 if you have any questions concerning this information.

* Updated 4/23/2019

**Included in 5307 apportionment

Multimodal

<i>Multimodal</i>		
<i>Capital Needs vs Anticipated Funding</i>		
<i>(millions of \$)</i>		
<i>Multimodal</i>	<i>Annual Need</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Transit Buses	\$6	Bus Replacement, Current Backlog - \$6M
Rail Lines - Bridges	\$19	Active State Owned Lines (10 Yr)
Rail Lines - Other	\$5	IRAP & Crossings Included
Ports & Harbors	\$7	Includes BIG & SHIP
Ferry Capital	\$7	Ferry Boat Replacement Plan (5-10 Yr)
Aviation	\$32	Aviation Program need analysis not available
Total Need	\$75	
Annual Multimodal Anticipated Funding	\$56	Includes FAA \$30M, GF G.O. Bond \$20M, Multimodal State Capital \$2.1, FTA \$3.6M, Ferry Boat Program \$0.5M
Annual Shortfall	-\$19	







February 25, 2019

To whom it may concern:

If more (dearly needed!) transit funding were to be made available Downeast transportation would:

- Bring our two year-round projects which have operated in the red for several years into the black.
- Expand our commuter program with The Jackson Lab (TJL), our county's largest employer, in order to improve economic opportunity to workers who live more remotely to the lab and who might have challenges in terms of transportation.
- Grow our year-round traditional transit service, returning more robust service to the downeast and Blue Hill peninsula areas. This would improve access to healthcare and services unavailable in more rural areas.
- Replace and expand our fleet of commuter coaches we operate on the commuter routes. Our four coaches are approaching the end of their useful lives and we are trying to grow the service from more remote destinations.
- Perhaps instate seven days per week service between Bar Harbor and Bangor.

Paul Murphy
Executive Director



March 1, 2019

Re: Repurposed Transportation Bill formerly LD 1248

To Rick McCarthy:

I am writing in support of the above referenced bill, which would enable Downeast Community Partners (DCP) Transportation Services, the MDOT region 2 regional provider, to expand services in Washington and Hancock counties, especially in the more rural remote areas.

DCP is a community action agency, and as such is required to perform regular and extensive needs assessments of the region. Lack of reliable transportation is a perennial need expressed by local residents and service providers and reflected in the community needs assessment. Our most recent survey of LIHEAP recipients showed that transportation concerns were a number one priority. Among the specific barriers to reliable transportation cited were a lack of public transportation, inability to afford to buy and maintain a car, and lack of a driver's license.

Downeast Community Partners Transportation Services actively pursues opportunities to solve the transportation needs of the residents of the counties we serve. In addition to non-emergency medical transportation, DCP operates regularly scheduled runs in many larger towns to accommodate shopping and other errands, and social visits for elders and community members, job-related transportation, and transportation support for cancer patients, among other things.

In spite of our best efforts, the resources of DCP are inadequate to meet the needs expressed by the community. Our fleet, though well maintained, is aging and limited in size. We are financially limited in the number of vehicles we can replace each year; without additional vehicles and the drivers to operate them, we cannot expand services to meet the growing need.

With an investment as provided in this bill, DCP would be able to expand the fleet and hire additional drivers. This would allow the addition of regular and demand response routes to better serve the elders, people with disabilities and low-income members of our communities. These vulnerable residents often struggle to find reliable transportation that will enable them to thrive in their chosen communities.

There is a growing need to provide support to those community members who are struggling to recover from addiction, as they often do not have a driver's license, but need to get to their counseling appointments, 12 step meetings, and other non-medical appointments. These trips are not covered under MaineCare, yet are critical to their recovery.



Additional regular routes would include services to the more rural communities in the two counties, and would include more in-town service in the commercial centers. We would like to create routes to better serve residents in the Princeton/Baileyville area, in the Blue Hill Peninsula and Deer Isle/Stonington area, and also in town Ellsworth, Calais and Machias.

To sum up, low-income and vulnerable residents of Washington and Hancock counties are struggling to survive a life in a rural area that they love, without the means to navigate that area. DCP Transportation Services lacks sufficient resources to solve this problem on its own. Funding through this bill could make all the difference to these people.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cheryl Robbins".

**Cheryl Robbins
Downeast Community Partners
Transportation Services
Director**

Sandy,

With just taking the Executive Director position, I have goals for ARTS which would help if we received additional funds. I have listed below some of those goals for ARTS if we could receive additional funding:

- 1. Increase the workforce for ARTS -- adding additional staffing**
- 2. Expand our existing routes with longer hours that would serve the workforce and early morning and/or late afternoon medical/DHHS appointments.**
- 3. Expand our exiting routes by adding additional vehicles**
- 4. Providers would not have to wait for vehicle replacements for an extended period.**
- 5. Since ARTS is a demand response system and by expanding existing service, ARTS would serve seniors, individuals with disabilities, veterans, children/parents, workforce, all ages for health care needs and the general public.**

There will be more as time goes on but I believe this would be a great start.

If you need further information, please let me know.

**Tammy Gagnon
ARTS
764-1290**

Casco Bay Island Transit District
5 Year District Capital Improvement Plan
1/9/19

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Facility	\$ 1,803,000	\$ 2,404,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Vessels	\$ 1,388,310	\$ 114,190	\$ 318,530	\$ 8,150,250	\$ 360,600	\$ 480,800
Safety & Security	\$ 120,200	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Customer Service	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Office	\$ -	\$ 134,624	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Preventive Maintenance	\$ 2,142,363	\$ 1,490,482	\$ 1,862,613	\$ 1,575,092	\$ 1,827,901	\$ 1,664,546
Total	\$ 3,650,873	\$ 1,739,296	\$ 2,181,143	\$ 9,725,342	\$ 2,188,501	\$ 2,145,346

What would WMTS do with \$1 million in local share funds?

If additional local funding of \$1 million became available to support public transit in the area WMTS serves, WMTS would continue to implement the strategic plan for public transit in western Maine outlined in the Western Maine Transit Feasibility Study that was completed in August of 2017 and updated in July of 2018, which can be found on our website at www.wmtsbus.org .

The lack of local match for Federal dollars impedes WMTS' ability to create meaningful and effective services and makes it impossible to be proactive in supplying transit services when and where needed. The expansion of public transit benefits all; employers, employees, persons in need of medical care, students that are continuing their education, the elderly, the young, the disabled, veterans, those who can drive but choose not to own a vehicle, those who can't or shouldn't drive.

Capital and operational costs of fully implementing this plan is approximately \$1.539 million dollars and although some small pieces of the plan have been implemented \$1 million would hasten the implementation of the much needed transit services in the WMTS service area. New routes, new equipment, and systems upgrades to support this expansion such as WIFI equipped buses, improved data and fare collection systems and the implementation "where's my bus" applications that use GIS and GPS are additional uses for additional funding.

Additionally, WMTS is also in the beginning stages of expanding our maintenance facilities by adding a maintenance bay and wash bay and additional more secure parking area for transit vehicles. It is expected this expansion will cost close to \$2.1 million dollars. Not only will this allow for the vehicles to be a more appealing option for travel through more frequent cleaning being available, it will also extend the life of the vehicles and reduce maintenance costs associated with public transit buses and vans.

An extra \$1 million would address the approximated \$1.250 million in local match necessary to draw down the Federal funds for these projects that would provide a more robust transit system throughout western Maine and beyond.

Expanding Access to Transportation, An Act to Improve Public Transportation in Maine

LR 1609, sponsored by Representative Sheats, seeks additional funding for Regional Transit Providers. If passed, this legislation would help Transit Providers to meet the increasing demand in Maine for public transportation. Public transportation is essential for economic development and can help seniors and other vulnerable Mainers to access critical services. Increasing public transportation options is especially important in the very rural parts of Maine.

York County, on the whole, is roughly 56% rural. Sixteen of the County's 29 towns are 100% rural. Clusters of more urbanized and populated areas exist primarily along the eastern seaboard (Biddeford, Old Orchard Beach and Saco, as well as Kennebunk), and in Maine's southernmost town of Kittery, which borders New Hampshire. The City of Sanford is also relatively urban, with just under one-third of its area/population considered rural. However, these six townships account for just 18% of York County's total land area, leaving the remaining 815 square miles highly rural.

Over 4,400 households throughout the County do not have access to a vehicle. Seventy-one percent of them (N=3,120) live in one of the six towns listed above and 84% of them rent their homes rather than owning them. Of the 1,283 remaining households with no access to a vehicle, a much lower percentage (45%) rent. Forty-five percent of these households (N=579) live in towns that are 100% rural, and 71% of them (N=411) own the homes they live in. Just under one-third of households (N=25,352) have one vehicle for the household; these households are much more evenly distributed throughout the County's rural and urban areas.

Because of the diffusive nature of the County, geographically and economically, residents who do not own or have access to a vehicle have a difficult time accessing resources and services. York County is typified by unusual cross-commuting patterns, which make it virtually impossible to operate a regular public transit system. There are very limited public transportation options available. Because of the distances involved and the relatively low rider volume, operating public transportation on a large scale is prohibitively expensive. While York County's eastern border has many miles of ocean shoreline, it has sparsely populated mountainous terrain to the north and west. Only one major highway traverses York County (Interstate 95/Maine Turnpike), but only six of the County's towns are adjacent to the turnpike.

York County
**COMMUNITY
ACTION**
Corporation

With having accessibility to additional funding would enable YCCAC to utilize these funds in several transportation objectives as outlined below;

- a) Use for the shortfall in local match of operating expenses for all public transportation programs YCCAC provides.
- b) Expand our local rides program that offers public transportation services to those towns not currently serviced. Offering the opportunity for those residents to attend medical appointments, shopping, social engagement (to reduce isolation) and meeting basic needs.
- c) Implement an "Eldercare" service that enables a service for those that are forced to reside by themselves for an abbreviated or extended period of time and do not drive or have access to transportation so they can visit their spouse or partner that have been hospitalized or for those instances when one of them is in constant care at a nursing home or similar.
- d) Expand our successful WAVE (Wheels to Access, Vocation and Education) to service other communities that lack an adequate workforce because transportation is a barrier for potential employees.
- e) Expansion of our existing volunteer program, enabling a broader area of coverage.
- f) The implementation of a new flex route providing services between Sanford to the Saco Transportation Center. This would offer better connections to other service providers and communities.
- g) The implementation of a new flex route providing services from Sanford, Wells to Kennebunk to provide transportation for workforce needs.
- h) Upgrade our technical software capabilities that offers communication features such as automatic ride reminder for on demand users...this could reduce wait times, no shows, inconveniences to other riders and the expenses associated to non-service.
- i) Expand our award winning seasonal trolley system the Shore Explorer; to include the Town of Kittery.

Each one of these possible options would benefit those within York County. Any implementation for each of these proposed opportunities would be based on the evaluation and prioritization of need, thorough planning and if the financial resource can be made available.

When YCCAC looks to develop or expand services, we explore the needs assessments; seek private and public input and determine where we can make the most positive impact possible. We know that we cannot meet all the needs of the region at once, but with additional funding, we can make positive progress toward achieving these.



Department of Veteran Affairs
Readjustment Counseling Services (RCS)
Sanford Vet Center
628 Main Street
Springvale, Maine 04083



April 4, 2019

Dear Robert,

I am writing in response to your request that I provide my thoughts regarding the importance of increasing transportation resources and services in York County. I am strongly in support of any measures that would address this major deficit in our community.

Lack of transportation serves as one of the largest barriers to care for the Veteran community. Although Veterans are often reimbursed for travel to Togus VAMC for service connected related healthcare or have the ability to ride on the DAV there, it is often extremely difficult for them to get from their homes in York County to places like the Saco VA CBOC or my Vet Center. Relying on family members and other social networks is not a fool proof plan as many Veterans isolate or due to age, have found their social network dwindling.

Thank you for giving me the chance to inform you of these concerns.

Respectfully,

Amy L. Marcotte
144111
Amy L. Marcotte, LCSW, BCD
Director

Digitally signed by Amy L.
Marcotte 144111
Date: 2019.04.04 07:39:10
-0400

To: Transportation Committee Re: LD 1258 (Transit bill)

**From: Chris Wright, Chair-Transportation Committee at *Aging Well in Waldo County*.
356 High Street
Belfast, Me. 04915
Chriswright2400@gmail.com**

Analyzing the results of a sophisticated and well run survey, Aging Well in Waldo County found 3 areas of outstanding difficulty for seniors in our county: Isolation, Housing and Transportation.

Public transportation in urban parts of the state is mostly non-existent. Where it has managed to stay afloat it has struggled to serve its mission with chronically inadequate resources.

We are the oldest population in the nation. We've moved too slowly in the past to support a modern and high use public transportation system. Let's get going.

Thank you



TOWN OF WELLS

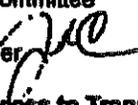
208 Sanford Road
Wells, Maine 04098

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Town Manager and
Board of Selectmen

Tel: (207) 646-5113
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TDD: (207) 646-7892
www.wellstowne.org

April, 2019

To: Honorable Chairman Senator Diamond
Honorable Chairman Representative McLean
Members of the Transportation Committee

From: Jonathan Carter, Town Manager 

Re: LD 1258 An Act to Increase Access to Transportation for Workforce and Other Transportation Needs

I am writing in support of LD 1258 An Act to Increase Access to Transportation for Workforce and Other Transportation Needs. This legislation is an incremental approach to continue to reach out to those in need of transportation who cannot afford it. It further will provide a system of rides, public transportation to the work place and for the elderly to remain in their homes while helping to create essential transportation services needed in urban and rural Maine.

The Town of Wells population is aging quickly and although we have many services within our community that would be considered essential to the elderly, it is difficult for many to travel to reach them. The York County Community Action Transportation services is supported by our community both with an annual municipal contribution, but also as a partner in pursuing more transportation into, within and out of our community for the low / moderate income and disabled workforce and the elderly to reach employment, workforce training at York County Community College's facilities and essential medical and shopping services.

LD 1258 provides for a modest amount of funds to put into transportation networks that exist presently but can grow innovatively for these targeted populations. Please consider affirmatively LD1258.

Thank you.

CC: Wells Board of Selectmen
State Senator Robert Foley
State Representative Daniel Hobbs
State Representative Patricia Hymanson



Testimony In support of LD 1258 An Act to Increase Access to Transportation for Workforce and Other Transportation Needs

Good afternoon. My name Rich Wilkinson, and I am the Vice President of Mountain Operations at Sugarloaf, located in Carrabassett Valley, Maine.

Sugarloaf's partnership with the Town of Carrabassett Valley and Western Maine Transportation has been tremendously beneficial, both to the citizens of Franklin County and to Sugarloaf's guests. Sugarloaf currently matches the municipal funding for Western Maine Transportation in our community, and this cooperation between public and private entities allows Western Maine Transportation to effectively serve both residents and local businesses.

The availability of reliable public transportation helps to reduce congestion on our roads and in our parking lots, reduces our carbon footprint, and provides a safe and reliable mode of transportation for our employees.

In the current tight labor market, Sugarloaf has had to attract employees from a broader geographic area, and the recent expansion of Western Maine Transportation services to Farmington and Stratton has allowed us to do that. Several of our departments now have many employees who rely on this daily service to get to and from work. With increased funding, we would look to expand transportation services to Madison and beyond.

Sugarloaf is the second largest employer in Franklin County, so access to reliable public transportation for our staff has a direct impact on the health of the local economy and environment.

We would strongly support increased state and federal funding for public transportation in our area.

Thank you for your time.

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Date: (Filing No. H-)

TRANSPORTATION

Reproduced and distributed under the direction of the Clerk of the House.

**STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
129TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT " " to H.P. 919, L.D. 1258, Bill, "An Act To Increase Access to Transportation for Workforce and Other Essential Transportation Needs"

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and inserting the following:

Sec. 1. Requirements. The Department of Transportation shall encourage local volunteer driver networks funded in section 2 to work with regional transportation providers to leverage the providers' experience, mobility management systems, vehicles and other resources; seek financial assistance from municipalities and other sources; charge modest fares; and serve all interested residents. The Department of Transportation shall distribute the funding for regional transportation providers in section 2 using the same formula as that by which current state public transportation funding is distributed, with 50% distributed to urban areas according to the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration formula and 50% distributed to rural areas according to the standards governing the Federal Transit Administration formula grants for rural areas under 49 United States Code, Section 5311, which include the number of square miles in the service area, the population of the service area and the percentage of low-income individuals in the service area. Regional transportation providers shall give preference to needs in their region in allocating funding.

Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF

Multimodal - Transit 0443

Initiative: Provides funding for regional transportation providers throughout the State to expand their services. Funding must be split evenly between rural and urban areas.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT " " to H.P. 919, L.D. 1258

1	GENERAL FUND	2019-20	2020-21
2	All Other	\$9,500,000	\$9,500,000
3			
4	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$9,500,000</u>	<u>\$9,500,000</u>

5 **Multimodal - Transit 0443**

6 Initiative: Provides funding to support and expand local volunteer driver networks.

7	GENERAL FUND	2019-20	2020-21
8	All Other	\$500,000	\$500,000
9			
10	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$500,000</u>	<u>\$500,000</u>

11 **TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF**
12 **DEPARTMENT TOTALS**

13		2019-20	2020-21
14	GENERAL FUND	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000
15			
16	DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	<u>\$10,000,000</u>	<u>\$10,000,000</u>

17
18 Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or
19 section number to read consecutively.

20 **SUMMARY**

21 This amendment provides funding to the Department of Transportation from the
22 General Fund instead of the Highway Fund to support and expand local volunteer driver
23 networks and for regional transportation providers through the State to expand their
24 services. Resources must be distributed evenly between urban and rural areas.