An Act to Advance the State's Public Transit Systems by Reinvigorating the Public Transit Advisory Council and Increasing Funding

Reference to the Committee on Transportation suggested and ordered printed.

Presented by Representative O'NEIL of Saco.
Cosponsored by Senator CHIPMAN of Cumberland and Representatives: BRIDGEO of Augusta, CLOUTIER of Lewiston, LANDRY of Farmington, MALON of Biddeford, MASTRACCIO of Sanford, SUPICA of Bangor, WILLIAMS of Bar Harbor, Senator: DAUGHERTY of Cumberland.
Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 23 MRSA §73, sub-§3, ¶E, as corrected by RR 1991, c. 2, §88, is amended to read:

E. Meet the diverse transportation needs of the people of the State, including rural and urban populations and the unique mobility needs of the elderly older adults and disabled persons with disabilities, including the employment of alternative modes of transportation;

Sec. 2. 23 MRSA §73, sub-§3, ¶F, as corrected by RR 1991, c. 2, §88, is amended to read:

F. Be consistent with the purposes, goals and policies of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act; and

Sec. 3. 23 MRSA §73, sub-§3, ¶G, as corrected by RR 1991, c. 2, §88, is amended to read:

G. Incorporate a public participation process in which local governmental bodies and the public have timely notice and opportunity to identify and comment on concerns related to transportation planning decisions, capital investment decisions and project decisions. The department and the Maine Turnpike Authority shall take the comments and concerns of local citizens into account and must be responsive to them;

Sec. 4. 23 MRSA §73, sub-§3, ¶H is enacted to read:

H. Facilitate and support the public transportation systems in the State to achieve accessibility, affordability and convenience for the average person who commutes; and

Sec. 5. 23 MRSA §73, sub-§3, ¶I is enacted to read:

I. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the emissions reduction targets established under Title 38, section 576-A.

Sec. 6. 23 MRSA §4209-A, sub-§2, ¶B, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 182, §8, is amended to read:

B. The following individuals appointed by the commissioner:

(1) One representative each from the federally designated planning organizations for the Bangor, Kittery, Lewiston and Auburn and Portland regions;

(2) One representative of private bus operators;

(3) One representative of a statewide nonprofit organization advocating on behalf of the elderly older adults;

(4) One representative of a medical provider;

(5) One representative of a business that relies on public transportation and an organization representing the business community with an affirmative interest in improving public transportation;

(6) One representative of a statewide association of planning and development agencies;

(7) One representative of an organization representing persons with disabilities;
(8) One representative of a nonprofit transit provider; Two representatives of
2 separate public or nonprofit urban transit agencies;
3 (9) One representative of an economic development organization; and
4 (10) One representative of an organization representing low-income persons;
5 (11) One representative of an organization from one of the State's immigrant
6 communities;
7 (12) One representative of a statewide labor union; and
8 (13) One representative representing youth interests related to climate change who
9 is 16 years of age or older and under 25 years of age.

In making appointments, the commissioner shall ensure that rural and urban areas are
represented.

Sec. 7. 23 MRSA §4209-A, sub-§4, as amended by PL 2019, c. 211, §2, is further
amended to read:

4. Terms; vacancies and; council chair; steering committee. A member of the
7 council appointed pursuant to subsection 2, paragraph B serves for a term of 3 years. Terms
8 must be staggered so that approximately one-third 1/3 of the council is renewed each
9 calendar year. If a member is unable to complete the term, the commissioner shall appoint
10 a member from the same category of members listed in subsection 2, paragraph B as the
11 member who vacated the council to serve out the unexpired portion of the term. The
12 commissioner shall determine how the council is to choose a chair and for how long the
13 chair is to serve. The council may establish a steering committee with the commissioner to
direct the work of the council.

Sec. 8. 23 MRSA §4209-A, sub-§4-A, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 211, §2, is
amended to read:

4-A. Meetings and deliberations. The council shall meet no less than once 4 times
8 per year at the call of the chair. The council may adopt bylaws and other policies to
effectively govern its proceedings.

Sec. 9. 23 MRSA §4209-A, sub-§5, as amended by PL 2019, c. 211, §2, is further
amended to read:

5. Report. The council shall report on its deliberations and any recommendations by
March February 1st of each odd-numbered year to the Governor and the joint standing
committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over transportation matters and health
and human services matters. The report must include:

A. An assessment of the level of public transportation services provided to the public;
B. Recommendations for the level of service that should be provided and an estimate
of the cost of providing those services; and
D. A progress report on recommendations contained in the implementation of the most
recent statewide strategic transit plan for the department as well as the quinquennial
locally coordinated plan for regional transit under section 4209, subsection 2; and
E. A progress report on the implementation of the statewide mobility management
program pursuant to subsection 6, paragraph B.
The joint standing committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction over transportation matters and health and human services matters may report out a bill relating to the report to the first regular session of the Legislature in which the report is received.

Sec. 10. 23 MRSA §4209-A, sub-§6 is enacted to read:

6. Duties. The council has the following duties in addition to those required pursuant to subsection 1.

A. The council shall prepare a statewide transit plan that must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Standards for adequate mobility in rural and urban areas of the State that address social and economic equity, economic impact and environmental impact;

2. An assessment of the existing public transportation services provided to the public in relation to statewide standards for adequate mobility;

3. Strategies to reach the statewide standards for adequate mobility with an estimate of the operating and capital costs of the strategies; and

4. A full accounting of all state and state-directed federal funding managed and distributed by the department for the most recently completed fiscal year for multimodal purposes, and a forecast of anticipated state and state-directed federal funding for the upcoming fiscal year.

B. The council shall prepare a statewide mobility management program in coordination with the geographic regions established under section 4209, metropolitan planning organizations, municipalities and public transportation agencies that aims to help individuals navigate the transportation system, while also working to make the system more coordinated and easier to access.

Sec. 11. Public Transit Advisory Council to set goals; report. The Public Transit Advisory Council, referred to in this section as "the council," shall identify measurable goals for expansion, efficiency, affordability and environmental impact in each geographic region under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 23, section 4209. The goals must include strategies to achieve the goals and methods to measure progress in achieving the goals. The council shall identify funding needs to achieve the goals and propose funding sources. No later than December 30, 2023, the council shall submit a report containing the information in this section to the Department of Transportation. No later than January 30, 2024, the department shall submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation with the report from the council and the department's plans based on the report. The department may engage with relevant stakeholders in developing its report, including large employers in the State. The committee may report out legislation relating to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature.

Sec. 12. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

TRANSITONR, DEPARTMENT OF
Multimodal - Transit 0443

Initiative: Provides a one-time General Fund appropriation of $25,000,000 to increase subsidies for bus transit operating and capital funds.
**GENERAL FUND**

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<th>2023-24</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Other</td>
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**GENERAL FUND TOTAL**

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**Multimodal - Transit 0443**

Initiative: Creates 2 Public Service Coordinator II positions to support transit planning assistance.

**GENERAL FUND**

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<tr>
<td>Personal Services</td>
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**GENERAL FUND TOTAL**

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**Multimodal - Transit 0443**

Initiative: Provides a one-time appropriation for bus transit operating costs.

**GENERAL FUND**

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**GENERAL FUND TOTAL**

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**TRANSPORTATION, DEPARTMENT OF**

**DEPARTMENT TOTALS**

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<td>GENERAL FUND</td>
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**DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS**

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**SUMMARY**

This bill:

1. Requires the Public Transit Advisory Council to meet 4 times per year;
2. Directs the Public Transit Advisory Council to identify measurable goals for expansion, efficiency, affordability and environmental impact in each geographic region and to report that information to the Department of Transportation. It requires the department to submit a report to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation on its planning activities related to the council's report;
3. Amends the transportation policy in the Sensible Transportation Policy Act to include facilitating and supporting public transportation systems in the State and reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
4. Amends the membership of the Public Transit Advisory Council;
5. Authorizes the Public Transit Advisory Council to establish a steering committee with the Commissioner of Transportation to direct the work of the council;
6. Directs the Public Transit Advisory Council to prepare a statewide transit plan and a statewide mobility management program;

7. Creates 2 positions within the Department of Transportation to support transit planning assistance;

8. Appropriates $25,000,000 to the Department of Transportation to increase subsidies for bus transit operating funds; and

9. Appropriates $13,600,000 to the Department of Transportation for bus transit operating costs.