

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE

H.P. 1004 - L.D. 1559

**An Act to Advance the State's Public Transit Systems by Reinvigorating the
Public Transit Advisory Council**

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; ~~and~~

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's mobility needs.

Sec. 5. 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~~ an organization representing the business community with an 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~~ Four representatives of 2 separate public or nonprofit transit agencies, 2 of whom represent an urban agency and 2 of whom represent a rural agency;
- (9) One representative of an economic development organization; ~~and~~
- (10) One representative of an organization representing low-income persons-;
- (11) One representative of an organization from one of the State's immigrant communities;
- (12) One representative of the State's unhoused community; and
- (13) One representative representing youth interests who 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. 6. 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. A member of the council appointed pursuant to subsection 2, paragraph B serves for a term of 3 years. Terms must be staggered so that approximately ~~one-third~~ 1/3 of the council is renewed each calendar year. If a member is unable to complete the term, the commissioner shall appoint a member from the same category of members listed in subsection 2, paragraph B as the member who vacated the council to serve out the unexpired portion of the term. ~~The commissioner shall determine how the council is to choose a chair and for how long the chair is to serve.~~ The council shall annually elect a chair and vice chair from among its members, each of whom serves a term of one year.

Sec. 7. 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 at the call of the chair no less than ~~once~~ 3 times per year ~~at the call of the chair~~. The council may form subcommittees and adopt bylaws and other policies to effectively govern ~~its~~ the council's proceedings.

Sec. 8. 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 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 and infrastructure provided to the public in each geographic region;

B. Recommendations for the level of service and supporting infrastructure that should be provided ~~and~~, an estimate of the cost of providing those services and supporting infrastructure and a recommendation for any necessary additional funding; 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.