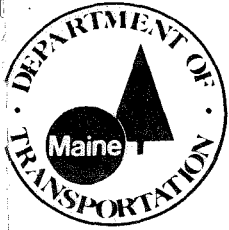


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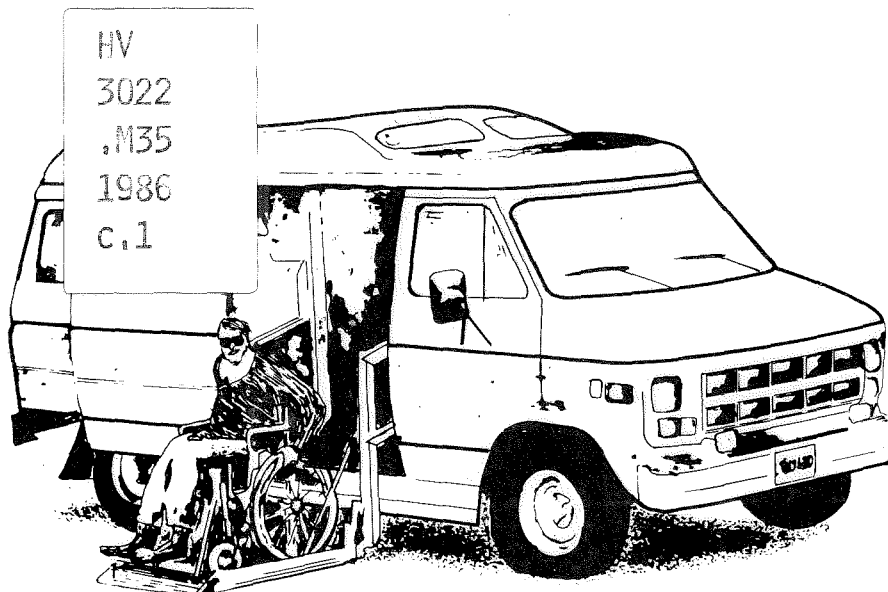


Maine Department
of Transportation

March 1986

INTERIM REPORT
of the
**Social Services
Transportation Committee**
As required by Legislative
Resolve 46

Joseph E. Brennan, Governor



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING
STATE HOUSE STATION 16 AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333



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DANA F. CONNORS
Commissioner

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March 24, 1986

Honorable Charles P. Pray
President of Senate
State House Station #3
Augusta, Maine 04333

Honorable John L. Martin
Speaker of House
State House Station #2
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Senator Pray and Representative Martin:

I am pleased to present to you an Interim Report of the Social Services Transportation Committee to Legislative Resolve #46 of 1985.

Legislative Resolve #46 mandated that a Social Services Transportation Review Committee be established to review the issue of Social Services Transportation and report to the Second Regular Session of the 112th Legislature. The report should include legislation necessary to implement statutory changes and appropriation requests.

The Social Services Transportation Review Committee met five times seeking to better identify and understand Maine's social services and public transportation needs. During these meetings, it became very evident to the Committee that the issues were too complex to enable preparation of a full report for the Second Session of the 112th Legislature. In addition, critical transportation shortages were exposed that did not have a funding source. These transportation hardships were identified in all areas of the State from Aroostook to York County. The Committee then decided to file an interim report fulfilling the mandate of L.D. #46, indicating that a full report of the transportation issue could not be completed in time for the Second Session of the 112th, and to alert Legislators and other concerned citizens that there are critical transportation needs (without funding) for additional services throughout the State.

I should also point out that the Department of Transportation has engaged the services of a consulting firm to conduct a Statewide Surface Transportation Needs Study which will identify the transportation needs of the State and offer specific recommendations concerning possible solutions. The Social Services Review Committee will continue to be involved with the Statewide Study Project.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Review Committee for their outstanding work on behalf of the people of Maine. The

Honorable Charles P. Pray
Honorable John L. Martin
March 24, 1986
Page 2

members are clearly dedicated to the issue of social services transportation and the need to adequately serve both rural and urban needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dana F. Connors". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dana F. Connors
Commissioner

DFC:LFW:gh

SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

March 24, 1986

I. INTRODUCTION

The First Regular Session of the 112th Legislature approved Emergency Legislation creating the Social Services Transportation Committee to "... conduct a general review of the issue of social service transportation and report to the 2nd Regular Session of the 112th Legislature."

The Resolve states further "That the report shall include legislation necessary to implement statutory changes and appropriation requests to carry out the recommendations of the review committee ..."

The Social Services Transportation Review Committee convened in November 1985 and met five times. During committee discussions of transportation services, it became evident that the issue was too complex to enable preparation of a full report to the Second Session of the 112th Legislature as the Resolve stated. It also became evident from testimony by committee representatives of the departments, providers, expert witnesses, and representatives of consumer groups, that emergency situations exist which current funding levels cannot meet. Therefore, it was decided to prepare an interim report to present the current state of transportation services and examine the emergency transportation needs throughout the State. Additional non-emergency needs have been identified and will be included in the complete transportation study which will be prepared and presented to the First Session of the 113th Legislature and will address continued appropriate funding levels.

Full Transportation Study

The complete transportation study is a longer range endeavor because many complex factors have contributed to current difficulties in providing cost effective services. The Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) has hired a consultant to conduct the study and accumulate pertinent data to evaluate current transportation services and funding. In order to provide sufficient information, this project is expected to take a year. The final report will be presented to the First Regular Session of the 113th Legislature, and will include the following information and recommendations:

1. A regional description of general population; population density; population of elderly, mentally handicapped and physically handicapped persons.
2. Identification and evaluation of present and latent transportation needs of the general public, commuters, low income, elderly and mentally/physically handicapped persons.
3. Identification and examination of existing public, private non-profit and private passenger transportation services.
4. Identification and evaluation of existing capital resources.
5. Development of a trend analysis of past annual service costs beginning with 1975 data.
6. Identification, examination and projection of costs associated with meeting the transportation needs of clients of the Departments of Human Services (DHS), Mental Health & Mental Retardation and other social service agencies.

7. Five and ten year projections of: transportation needs of general public, commuters, low income, elderly, mentally handicapped and physically handicapped persons.

8. Recommendations concerning improvement, expansion, coordination, consolidation, and/or elimination of service, including impact if such does not occur.

9. Recommendations concerning immediate, short-range, and long-range capital improvements of each provider agency.

10. Recommendations relating to the future of transportation programs in Maine in light of cutbacks in Federal subsidy.

11. Recommendations relative to the organizational structure and staffing levels of the Public Transportation Division within MDOT to adequately administer present and future transportation programs.

12. Recommendation relative to a transit data information system for the non-urbanized service area.

13. Evaluation of the roles of the Departments of Transportation, Human Services, and Mental Health and Mental Retardation in providing funding for transportation service with special attention paid to departmental and governmental regulations and other constraints.

14. Assessment of current marketing strategies and recommendations as to where and what strategies are needed.

15. Assessment of the planning process.

Emergency Needs for Transportation Services

During discussions, it became evident that emergency situations exist in various areas of the State, particularly in rural areas. Therefore, a subcommittee was formed to study the extent of this problem.

Emergency needs are defined as situations where an individual's health, safety, or ability to live independently is in jeopardy due to lack of transportation services. The most vulnerable groups include:

1. elderly at risk of being institutionalized;
2. adults and children who are in jeopardy of abuse and neglect or under State guardianship or custody;
3. citizens who are mentally retarded or mentally/physically handicapped;
4. emergency medical needs of general low income individuals not covered for reimbursement by a current funding source.

The committee surveyed each transportation district, identifying where continued service to the above client groups have been interrupted due to insufficient funds from all sources. The results of this survey is included as Attachment A.

II. TRANSPORTATION MODE

Currently in the State of Maine we have two types of transportation service: 1. Fixed Route Services which are primarily public transit but incorporates some social services transportation; 2. Demand Response Services which are primarily for social service purposes but incorporates some transportation services for the general public.

1. Fixed Route

Fixed route (public transit) services are provided in the major cities such as Bangor, Lewiston-Auburn, Portland, South Portland and the Kittery area. The service in these urban areas is provided by local transit authorities and funded primarily by Urban Mass Transportation (UMTA). Section 18 funds are not allocated for these transit programs because they are not rural programs. In addition, several rural transportation agencies provide limited fixed route service funded by the Public Transit Rural Assistance Program (Section 18 of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration). The agencies providing this limited service are described in Section III.

2. Demand-Response

This is the primary means of providing social service transportation in the State. Each of the regional transportation systems have contracts with the Departments of Human Services, Mental Health and Mental Retardation, the Area Agencies on Aging, and a variety of local social service organizations. Demand-response is the primary means of providing transportation services to social service and Medicaid eligible clients. A variety of methods are employed in providing demand-response service, including the use of volunteer drivers. Eight of the nine transportation providers of regional social service agencies also receive UMTA Section 18 funds which requires that the services be open to the general public.

In 1975, complying with the recommendations of a major study of transportation needs in the State, the Commissioners of the Department of Human Services and the Department of Transportation consolidated social services transportation. Legislation was passed on July 21, 1979, which mandated regional transportation plans; however, that planning process was primarily oriented towards allocation of existing MDOT Section 18 funds and did not address needs above known funding levels. The system has remained intact since that time with relatively little statewide coordination of service.

However, this is the only organized approach we currently have in the State of Maine which can assist rural poor people in getting to needed social and medical services.

III. EXISTING SERVICES

As a result of a legislative mandate in 1979, the Maine Department of Transportation divided the State into eight transportation regions. These regions, as identified in Attachment B, and the providers of transportation service within each region are as follows:

Region I - Aroostook County

The Aroostook Regional Transportation Program of Presque Isle operates a rural fixed route and demand-response service. All buses are open to the public. The service is subsidized by UMTA Section 18 and other funding sources.

Region II - Washington-Hancock Counties

1. The Washington County Regional Planning Commission, receiving Section 18 and municipal funds, subcontracts with West's Transportation Service of Milbridge to provide rural, fixed route, general public transportation in Washington County.

2. The Passamaquoddy Tribe, Pleasant Point Reservation receives Section 18 and other funds to provide fixed route general public transportation in and around the reservation.

3. The Passamaquoddy Tribe, Indian Township Reservation also receives subsidy under the Section 18 Program for fixed route general public transportation in the area of their reservation.

4. Sunrise Workshop, located in Machias, provides general public, demand-response and sheltered workshop client transportation service, with funding received under Section 18 and other sources.

5. Washington-Hancock Community Agency provides demand-response service from their base in Milbridge. The service is not currently open to the public and the agency receives no Section 18 funding.

6. Downeast Transportation, Inc. of Ellsworth receives Section 18 funds to provide fixed route general public and limited demand-response service in Hancock County.

Region III - Penobscot-Piscataquis Counties

1. Eastern Transportation, Inc. of Bangor provides rural, fixed route general public transportation and demand-response service. Subsidy is provided under Section 18 and from various human service programs.

2. In addition, Penquis Community Action Program provides additional services, strictly through the use of volunteer drivers, to DHS protective client groups as designated by the Bureau of Social Services.

Region IV - Kennebec-Somerset Counties

Kennebec Valley Community Action Program of Waterville provides fixed route general public transit service in the Augusta and Waterville areas and demand-response service in all sections of Kennebec and Somerset Counties. Section 18 funds are used for fixed route service and funds from the various human service agencies are used to operate the demand-response transportation program.

Region V - Waldo, Knox, Sagadahoc, Lincoln

1. Waldo County Community Action Program of Belfast operates a rural fixed route general public service and contracted demand-response service in Waldo County, utilizing Section 18 and human service funding.

2. Coastal Trans, Inc. of Rockland receives Section 18 and various human service agency funds to provide rural fixed route and demand-response service in Knox, Sagadahoc and Lincoln Counties. Buses are open to the general public.

3. City of Bath receives Section 18 funds to provide fixed route service for the general public in the City of Bath.

Region VI - Cumberland County

1. Regional Transportation Program, Inc. of Portland receives funding under UMTA Section 18 and 9 and from various human service agencies to operate a rural fixed route general public service and a demand-response service in Cumberland County.

2. In addition, People's Regional Opportunity Program provides additional services to Bureau of Social Services (BSS) protective client groups using volunteer drivers.

Region VII - Androscoggin, Franklin & Oxford Counties

1. Western Maine Transportation Service, Inc. of Rumford provides rural fixed route general public and demand-response service in Region VII. Funding for this service is provided under UMTA Section 18 and 9 and from various human service agencies.

2. In addition, Androscoggin Valley Community Action Agency provides additional services to BSS protective client groups using volunteer drivers.

Region VIII - York County

1. The York County Community Action Program, located in Sanford, operates a rural fixed route service for the general public and demand-response service in York County. Funding is received from UMTA Section 18 and 9 and from various human service agencies.

2. Biddeford, Saco, Old Orchard Beach Transit Committee of Biddeford receives Section 18 funding for general public fixed route service in the tri-city area.

IV. NEEDS AND DEFICIENCIES

Citizens Who Are Mentally Retarded and Mentally/Physically Handicapped

Maine, as well as the nation has, fortunately, witnessed considerable public legal and legislative recognition and support for the provision of an array of vocational, training, and independent living option for persons who are mentally retarded and mentally handicapped. The emphasis is on maintaining, wherever possible, these individuals in their own homes and communities. This recognition has been strongly supported by three Administrations and by the Maine Legislature through statutory mandates and appropriations. Increasing numbers of parents, families, and concerned community groups are asking for assistance in developing vocational, independent living, and other programs which fulfill the State's policy of assisting individuals who are mentally handicapped to live as productive and normal a life as possible. In 1979, for example, the Bureau of Mental Retardation's caseload was 1,900; today it is approximately 3,800. The development of a system of services entails in a predominantly rural state, increased transportation expenditures to training, and vocational and day programs, and other activities.

Elderly Needs

In recent years there has been a concerted effort to keep frail elderly individuals as independent as possible to avoid inappropriate placement in nursing or boarding homes. This group can only remain independent when transportation services are available.

There is also a large group of elderly who would become at risk of institutional care if they did not have access to a range of services for which transportation is crucial.

There is another group of elderly that although well, cannot afford to maintain their vehicles. Furthermore, despite their lack of financial resources most of this group does not qualify for Medicaid which would provide them with transportation.

All of these problems are compounded by the fact that Maine is a rural State and that many people have to travel great distances to meet daily needs. In addition, Maine winters present many older persons with other transportation difficulties.

It is generally agreed that volunteers could really meet many transportation needs. Unfortunately, however, adequate resources are not available to reimburse a sufficient number of volunteers to provide a fair reimbursement. Increasing concern regarding insurance liability and costs are also stumbling blocks to using volunteers.

Bureau of Social Services Transportation Needs and Funding

Several years ago, the Department of Human Services determined that both in-house and purchased services should be directed first to its highest priority clients, adult and child protective clients as well as those adults and children who are in the guardianship or custody of the State. Many of these individuals are not only in the lowest income levels and residing in rural areas, but often have special transportation needs which cannot be easily accommodated through the regular hours or operations of fixed route transportation programs.

This specialized type of service is more expensive than public transit because it serves individuals who often require one-on-one service through the use of volunteer drivers. Currently, 10 of the 17 transportation contracts managed at BSS, are significantly over-delivered in service in the first quarter of this contract year (10/1/85 - 9/30/86); they are over-delivering service at the end of the first quarter by over 54,000 passenger miles. With no indication that referrals from the BSS Regional Offices will slow down, this means that some contracts will be depleted by mid-summer and would require additional funds to provide an additional 216,000 passenger miles in order to continue providing service to the end of September.

Attachment C provides an analysis of the growth in Human Services case loads from 1980 - 1985 which explains the decision to prioritize service. Statistics by the Bureau of Social Services indicate the overall increase in funding in that six-year period was 43%. However, since the required BSS match for Medicaid services (50/50) tripled in that period with an increase of 197%, the overall increase to all other social service programs was actually only 28%, or less than 5% per year. In addition, a review of contracted passenger miles shows that actual contracted service through 1985 increased only 12% for BSS clients and 119% for Medicaid clients.

New and Expanded Programs

In addition, new and expanded programs are being funded by the Legislature to meet special needs but which do not provide additional funds for transportation services. A sample of such programs include:

- A. Health screening programs for pre-school children in the Bangor area.
- B. Training program for handicapped high school students in Southern Kennebec County.
- C. Kidney dialysis service provided by several Maine hospitals.
- D. Radiation therapy at several Maine hospitals.
- E. Expanded Head Start slots, as shown in Attachment C, is a good example of the Legislature recognizing the need to expand a program without adding transportation funding for those additional services.

V. CONCLUSION

Empty buses running through cities is not reflective of demand-response. Demand-response consists of volunteers being reimbursed to drive frail elderly to dialysis treatment. It consists of vans transporting mentally retarded clients to workshops. It provides transportation for low income children to day care centers or health. It provides needed transportation services to BSS protective client groups. Demand-response is primarily a rural program. It enables elderly from Jackman to receive health care services in Waterville.

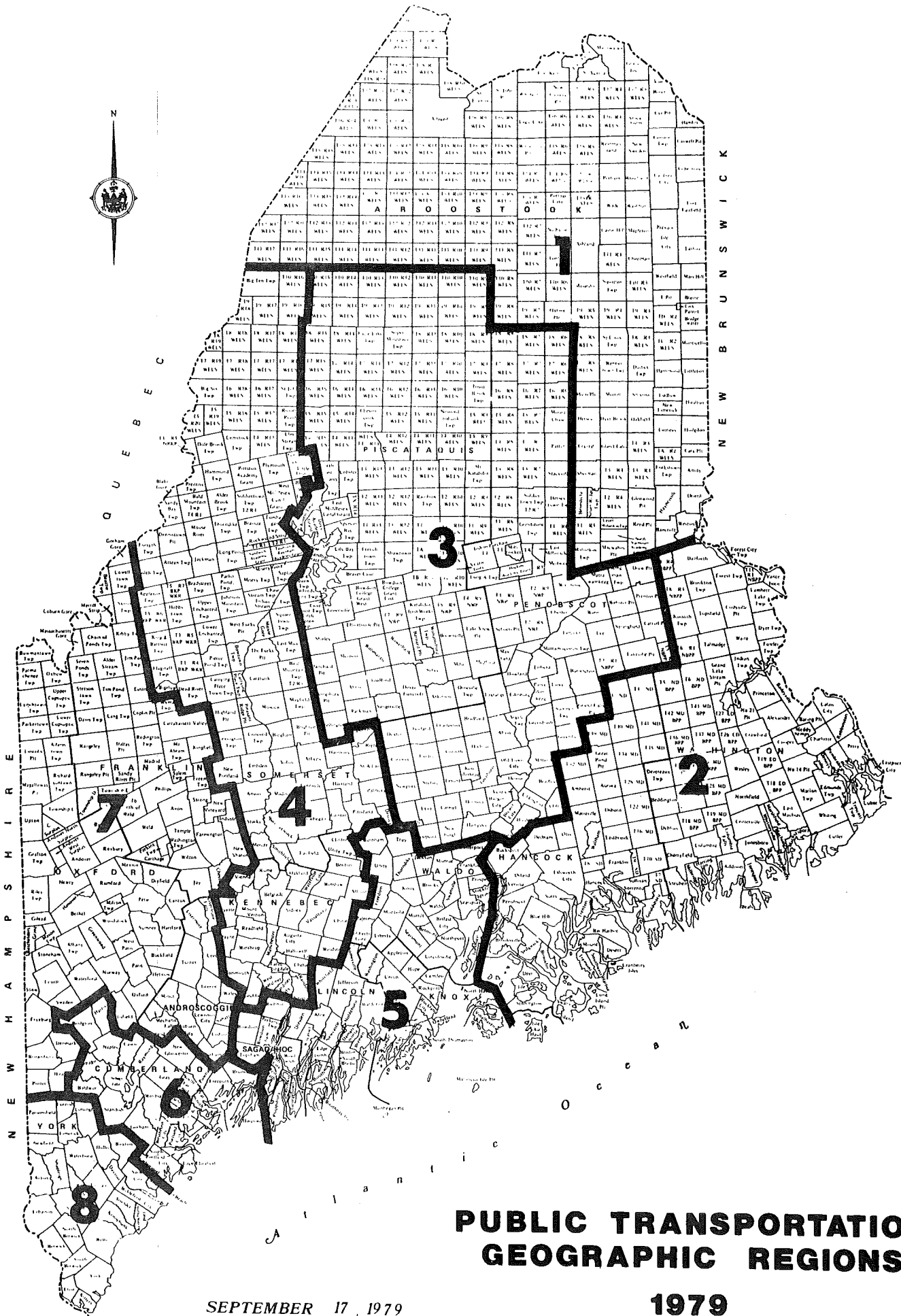
Many residents of Washington County would be unable to receive services in Bangor if the Washington-Hancock CAP agency could not transport them. The Aroostook Transportation Program provides the only opportunity for many frail elderly and low income people to receive services in Bangor, Portland, or Boston. People throughout the State are on waiting lists for needed social services.

As indicated in the introduction to this report, we have concluded that emergency situations exist which current funding levels do not meet. We have attempted in this report to provide you with a description of the current state of transportation services in Maine. We cannot provide detailed supportive documentation at this time; that will be provided in the full report, but we have no reason to doubt what we are told by the providers and the users of transportation services. Therefore, we ask for thoughtful consideration and legislative response to this most serious need as expressed by our most vulnerable citizens.

EMERGENCY HUMAN SERVICES

TRANSPORTATION REQUEST

<u>REGION</u>	<u>MENTALLY RETARDED MENTALLY HANDICAPPED</u>	<u>ELDERLY AT RISK</u>	<u>BSS PROTECTIVE</u>	<u>EMERGENCY MEDICAL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1	\$ 17,000	\$ 20,400	\$ 3,500	\$ 6,000	\$ 46,900
2	19,000	21,200	10,000	26,200	76,400
3	59,500	3,500	14,500	3,000	80,500
4	7,000	22,000	14,000	18,000	61,000
5	7,600	20,200	14,400	38,200	80,400
6	11,000	5,000	23,500	37,500	77,000
7	19,500	19,000	28,800	9,900	77,200
8	<u>17,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>	<u>24,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>81,000</u>
TOTALS	\$157,600	\$141,300	\$132,700	\$148,800	\$580,400



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS

SEPTEMBER 17, 1979

1979

SELECTED EXAMPLES OF GROWTH IN HUMAN SERVICES CASELOADS

<u>PROGRAM/SERVICE</u>	<u>1980CY</u>	<u>1985CY</u>	<u>INCREASE</u>
Children in Custody (Individuals)	3,300	2,900	12% Decrease
Child Protective (Families)	3,986	8,780	120%
Adult Protective (Individuals)	1,500	4,200	180%
Home Base Care (Elderly)	(1984) 985	1,393	41%
Intermediate Care Facility (Nursing Home Facility)	156	153	2% Decrease
Intermediate Care Facility/Mentally Retarded (Facility)	28	39	39%
Boarding Home (Beds)	319	341	7%
Foster Home (Beds)	(Jan 1983) 278	314	13%
Individuals with Mentally Handicapping Conditions	21,000	28,000	33%
Aid for Dependent Children (Families)	20,174	18,893*	6% Decrease
Supplemental Security Income	18,000	22,000	22%
General Assistance	42,420**	72,108*	70%
Day Care (Slots)	2,324	3,123	34%
Headstart (Slots)	(1982) 1,492	2,334***	56%

* Approximately 57,000 recipients (36,000 of which are children).

** Based on average monthly figures of 3,535 and 6,009 respectively.

***The State appropriated \$1.7 million in 1984 to create additional slots, however it should be noted - that no additional funds were provided for transportation.