



*“Striving to invigorate hope, bringing dreams to life.”*

April 25, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Support Letter for Maine Department of Transportation (Maine DOT) Application to the Federal Transit Administration’s Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Program

Dear Secretary, Buttigieg,

Happy Haven is pleased to support Maine Dot’s request for funding through the Federal Transit Administration’s Fiscal Year 2024 Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Program. Happy Haven serves Maine adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities & Autism, by providing housing and 24/7 staff support. All 25 of our homes are located in the Lewiston/Auburn area. Our services are what President Biden referenced in his 2025 budget as Home and Community-based services (HCBS). Part of the philosophy behind HCBS is ensuring that the folks we serve have access to reliable transportation in their community. We’ve been very grateful to the Lewiston Auburn Transit team for doing everything in their power to ensure consistent accessibility.

The Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Program’s goals are to improve the condition of public transportation infrastructure to maintain critical services and assure that our users have access to safe and reliable transportation. This grant opportunity will provide urgently needed funds to bring the infrastructure to a state of good repair by adding insulation, heating, modern technology to ensure safety; and overall maximize operational reliability. Additionally, the infrastructure improvements will put the agency in a good position for future fleet transition into low-or-no emission vehicles.

If funded, this will allow for the reconstruction and expansion of the facility which will meet all compliance standards(which includes ADA compliance), enhance amenities for current and future employees, and improve the reliability of the service in the Lewiston/Auburn area. In our sector of Health & Human Services, Maine, in collaboration with providers have worked very hard to ensure inclusive community integration.

We at Happy Haven strongly support Maine Dot’s grant application for this pivotal project. And on behalf of Mainers with intellectual and developmental disabilities & Autism, and their families & support staff, we are all hopeful that you will give the project your full consideration and award the requested funding.

**Amanda Karomba**  
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