



January 17, 2025

Dear Chair Walker and Members of the House Transportation Committee:

Policy and funding decisions about transportation resources determine much more than where roads or bridges are constructed and maintained – your decisions determine the connections and barriers that Vermonters encounter in their daily lives.

**AARP Vermont urges you to align the state’s budget with the needs of Vermonters, starting with including necessary funding to fill critical gaps in access to public transit through the Budget Adjustment Act.**

Green Mountain Transit (GMT), the state’s largest transit provider, has been forced to cut services given the ongoing shortage of transit funding - leaving Vermonters without the ability to get to where they need to go. The B.A.A. could prevent further planned cuts this year with an allocation of \$1.2 million; \$1.9 million would restore the routes already lost.

Vermont is not prepared for a future when nearly 25 percent of the population is age 65 or over, and nearly a quarter of that group will not be able to drive. **Older adults’ levels of isolation, depression, and general life satisfaction — and even the age at which they enter long-term care facilities — are all connected to how easily they can get from point A to B.** I know the legislature is grappling with very difficult funding decisions this legislative session and I encourage this committee to protect public transit – as transportation is often the barrier for many Vermonters and cutting services will have wide-ranging impacts on the economy.

I thank you for your consideration of recommending that we fill this critical gap for public transit through the B.A.A., and I look forward to working with the House Transportation Committee this legislative session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly Stoddard Poor".

Kelly Stoddard Poor  
Associate State Director  
AARP Vermont