



April 6, 2023

Testimony in Opposition to LD 1245

An Act to Require Registration of Motorized Bicycles or Tricycles or Motorized Scooters

Greetings Chairs Chipman and Williams and the distinguished members of the Committee on Transportation:

My name is James Tassé and I am the Assistant Director of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM). Our mission is to make Maine better and safer for bicycling and walking. On behalf of our more than 20,000 members and supporters, I am submitting this testimony in OPPOSITION to LD 1245. The BCM believes that this bill will not solve perceived issues with “motorized bicycles” and will create expensive and burdensome complications for the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. For these reasons, the BCM urges an “Ought Not to Pass” report from the committee.

Of particular concern to the Coalition is the fact that the sponsor apparently intends for this legislation to apply to low speed electric assist bicycles, although it would not as written, because the definition of “motorized bicycles” under Maine law explicitly does not include e-bikes.

E-bikes are already well-regulated under Title 29-A Chapter 19 §2063, and adding a requirement to register devices that typically operate at less than 28mph is unnecessary and would prove burdensome to owners and state offices alike. E-bikes operate at “human scale” speeds, are silent, and are zero emissions. The BCM is working with both the MaineDOT and the Efficiency Maine Trust to launch test ride and rebate programs that seek to encourage people to adopt e-bikes. LD 1245’s burdensome requirements would be at cross purposes to the work of these other state entities.

In testimony from Deputy Director Catherine Curtis of the Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles, the committee heard of the burdens this legislation would place upon the Bureau, as well as the “significant fiscal note” that would be necessary to implement it. We agree with that assessment.

An additional concern is the impact this bill would have on law enforcement departments, which would be expected to enforce this policy if it became law. We submit that there are many more important things Maine’s law enforcement professionals could be doing than pulling over a 60 year old woman riding an unregistered Class 1 e-bike.



Maine, like most states, treat e-bikes as bicycles, because they are devices that operate at “human-scale” speeds and have significant benefits for roadway safety, low-income mobility, and health.

Any local concerns about the operation of e-bikes, or even “motorized bicycles,” are best managed by local policy actions that are targeted at specific, documentable, issues. Creating more government bureaucracy and pointless regulation at the state level will not solve any perceived local problems concerning these devices.

LD 1245 is poorly conceived, poorly written, and burdensome to state government and citizens alike. It should receive an Ought Not To Pass report from this committee.

Thank you for your time, and for your service to the state.

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "James Tassé". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 't'.

James Tassé
Assistant Director
Bicycle Coalition of Maine

James Tasse
Bicycle Coalition of Maine
LD 1245

Testimony in Opposition to LD 1245
An Act to Require Registration of Motorized Bicycles or Tricycles or Motorized
Scooters

Greetings Chairs Chipman and Williams and the distinguished members of the
Committee on Transportation:

My name is James Tassé and I am the Assistant Director of the Bicycle Coalition of
Maine (BCM). Our mission is to make Maine better and safer for bicycling and
walking. On behalf of our more than 20,000 members and supporters, I am
submitting this testimony in OPPOSITION to LD 1245. The BCM believes that this
bill will not solve perceived issues with “motorized bicycles” and will create
expensive and burdensome complications for the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. For these
reasons, the BCM urges an “Ought Not to Pass” report from the committee.

Of particular concern to the Coalition is the fact that the sponsor apparently intends
for this legislation to apply to low speed electric assist bicycles, although it would not
as written, because the definition of “motorized bicycles” under Maine law explicitly
does not include e-bikes.

E-bikes are already well-regulated under Title 29-A Chapter 19 §2063, and adding a
requirement to register devices that typically operate at less than 28mph is
unnecessary and would prove burdensome to owners and state offices alike. E-bikes
operate at “human scale” speeds, are silent, and are zero emissions. The BCM is
working with both the MaineDOT and the Efficiency Maine Trust to launch test ride
and rebate programs that seek to encourage people to adopt e-bikes. LD 1245’s
burdensome requirements would be at cross purposes to the work of these other state
entities.

In testimony from Deputy Director Catherine Curtis of the Maine Bureau of Motor
Vehicles, the committee heard of the burdens this legislation would place upon the
Bureau, as well as the “significant fiscal note” that would be necessary to implement
it. We agree with that assessment.

An additional concern is the impact this bill would have on law enforcement
departments, which would be expected to enforce this policy if it became law. We
submit that there are many more important things Maine’s law enforcement
professionals could be doing than pulling over a 60 year old woman riding an
unregistered Class 1 e-bike.

Maine, like most states, treat e-bikes as bicycles, because they are devices that operate
at “human-scale” speeds and have significant benefits for roadway safety, low-income
mobility, and health.

Any local concerns about the operation of e-bikes, or even “motorized bicycles,” are
best managed by local policy actions that are targeted at specific, documentable,
issues. Creating more government bureaucracy and pointless regulation at the state
level will not solve any perceived local problems concerning these devices.

LD 1245 is poorly conceived, poorly written, and burdensome to state government
and citizens alike. It should receive an Ought Not To Pass report from this committee.

Thank you for your time, and for your service to the state.

James Tassé
Assistant Director
Bicycle Coalition of Maine