



April 24, 2023

## **Testimony in Support of LD 1411**

### **An Act to Require the Adoption of Sector-specific Greenhouse Gas Emissions Limits**

Greetings Chairs Senator Brenner and Representative Gramlich and distinguished members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

My name is Jean Sideris, Executive 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 testimony in support of LD 1411 “An Act to Require the Adoption of Sector-specific Greenhouse Gas Emissions Limits”

Climate change is already affecting Maine’s economy, residents, and way of life. Without deep reductions in emissions, we can anticipate that rising sea levels, more frequent natural disasters, and increasing temperatures will negatively affect all aspects of our livelihood from infrastructure to tourism to public health. Maine has a strong, bipartisan framework in place for tackling climate change: we have greenhouse gas emissions obligations requiring 45% gross reductions by 2030, 80% by 2050, and net-zero emissions by 2045.

But, those benchmarks are for overall emissions reductions and do not set specific targets by sector, including transportation. As transportation accounts for more than half of Maine’s emissions, setting specific greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets could help provide a framework to set goals and priorities in transportation decision-making that align with Maine’s emissions reduction goals.

With the creation of the Statewide Active Transportation Plan and increased focus on walkable/bikeable communities through programs like the Village Partnership Initiative, the Maine Department of Transportation is taking important steps to shift our transportation system from single-occupancy vehicles to more sustainable transportation modes like transit and active transportation. A requirement to set specific greenhouse gas emissions goals would very likely result in prioritizing projects that are lower-emissions or emissions-free options.

According to the US Department of Transportation, 59% of all trips taken in Maine in 2021 were 5 miles or less. This demonstrates that Maine has enormous potential to shift away from short driving trips and replace them with transit, biking, or walking. Setting transportation specific greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets and reporting regularly on progress, could provide



the much needed incentive to make significantly larger investments in transit and active transportation.

Because of these reasons, the BCM urges an Ought to Pass vote on this bill.

Thank you for your time and service to the people of Maine.

Sincerely,

Jean Sideris  
Executive Director  
Bicycle Coalition of Maine