



April 4, 2023

Testimony in Support of LD 1076

An Act to Expand the Use of Traffic Cameras for School and Work Zones

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 support of LD 1076 **An Act to Expand the Use of Traffic Cameras for School and Work Zones**. The BCM believes that the limited deployment of automated speed enforcement devices in school and work zones will improve compliance with posted speed limits, improve roadway safety, and reduce the burden currently placed on local law enforcement for this important traffic duty. For these reasons, the BCM urges an "Ought to Pass" report from the committee.

The BCM frequently hears complaints from Maine citizens about the threats posed by speeding traffic on residential roads, downtown streets and school zones. One measure of the public concern over this problem is the fact that the Transportation Committee is hearing at least three bills on targeted speed limit reductions, including one, LD 31, that focuses on work zones. But no matter what the posted speed may be there are only two reliable ways to ensure that drivers comply with it: 1) changing the road design and 2) law enforcement.

Changing road design is an important component of efforts to calm traffic, but LD 1076 is a bill that increases Maine's capacity to enforce traffic law in specific contexts.

Police officers (and NHTSA) has referred to traffic cameras as "force multipliers" that let understaffed departments do more with less. At a time when many Maine departments are struggling to fill positions and there are rising concerns about enforcement efforts targeted at low-income and minority residents, traffic cameras will permit traffic enforcement to happen without the expense and personnel challenge of putting an officer in a cruiser on site.

By limiting the use of automated speed enforcement to work and school zones, LD 1076 focuses on high need locations where vulnerable users are frequently present. Focusing on work and school zones also sidesteps legitimate concerns that this technology could be used to target



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marginalized or minority groups by placing more cameras in low-income or minority communities compared to other locations.

Perhaps the most compelling argument to use them is the fact that speed cameras work. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)¹ reports reductions in problem speeding (10+ over the speed limit) as high as 64% at camera locations in the US.

While Title 29-A, Chapter 19, §2117 restricts the use of traffic cameras, the law was changed in 2019 to permit their use on school buses. LD 1076 extends the same benefits that come from their deployment on buses to fixed school zones and construction zones. The restrictions on the use of data collected by the school bus camera provided the model for similar restrictions on how data is kept and used under LD 1076. If necessary, additional language could be added to the bill that would restrict the data's usage to only enforcing speeding violations under §2074 and §2075.

The BCM urges an Ought to Pass vote on this bill.

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

Sincerely,

James Tassé
Assistant Director
Bicycle Coalition of Maine

¹ <https://www.nhtsa.gov/book/countermeasures/countermeasures/21-automated-enforcement>