



April 4, 2023

Testimony in Support of LD 1141 with Amendments

An Act to Improve Access and System Preservation by Providing Shoulders and Bicycle Lanes on State Roadways Leading to State Parks and Other Significant Destinations

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 1141 with amendments. The BCM believes that passing this bill, with the amendment proposed below, will create some clearer priorities and timeframes with respect to shoulder construction in Maine. For these reasons, the BCM urges an "Ought to Pass with Amendment" report from the committee.

Maine has many attractive destinations that appeal to tourists both in-state and from away. State parks, historic sites, and intrinsically beautiful roads are places that many folks would like to visit on foot or by bicycle. However, the lack of shoulders or any other accommodation for persons not in cars makes these locations unsafe and uncomfortable.

There is strong public demand for better vulnerable user accommodation on many roads in Maine. The BCM coordinated the public outreach for the MaineDOT's recently completed Statewide Active Transportation Plan, and in that process over two thousand public comments were received, significantly outstripping the comments for the Rail and Transit plans. In comment after comment, the public called for shoulders on rural highways that access popular routes and destinations such as state parks. LD 1141 would help answer the public call for improved access to our public ways.

That said, the BCM does not support using tourism marketing or state park operational funds to achieve this laudable goal. We therefore recommend that bill be amended so as to:

- Delete all references to transfers from the "Tourism Marketing Promotion Fund Other Special Revenue Funds account within the Department of Economic and Community Development" and/or the "Parks - General Operations program, General Fund account within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry."



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- Direct the MaineDOT to fund and undertake the analysis and prioritization work as part of its implementation of the State Active Transportation Plan.

The amendment directing the MaineDOT could be some version of this draft statement, which would replace the deleted funding language:

D. The MaineDOT shall include and fund this program in the process of identifying High-Priority AT (HPAT) road corridors as part of its implementation of goals outlined in the Statewide Active Transportation Plan.

We have discussed such an amendment with Senator Moore, the bill's sponsor, and she is in agreement with us. We have included a complete draft of the possible changes recommended here.

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

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James Tassé".

James Tassé
Assistant Director
Bicycle Coalition of Maine