



**Department of the Secretary of State
Bureau of Motor Vehicles**

Shenna Bellows
Secretary of State

Catherine Curtis
Deputy Secretary of State

September 16, 2026

The Honorable Craig Hickman, Senate Chair
The Honorable Anne-Marie Mastraccio, House Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Government Oversight
c/o Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability
82 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Senator Hickman, Representative Mastraccio, and Members of the Government Oversight Committee,

The mission of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles is to protect public safety on Maine roadways. We are committed to continuous improvement of customers' experience to improve accessibility and reliability; a positive employee experience where our employees are experts, valued and empowered to serve the public; investment in trusted technologies to improve efficiency and security; and ever safer roadways by supporting improvements to driver education, driver behavior and vehicle safety initiatives. Roadway safety is our north star.

At our meeting on February 13th, 2026, you requested the BMV report back to the Committee on Government Oversight in 6 months with citizen and non-citizen test passage rates. We are happy to provide the following information in response to your request.

On February 1st, 2026, we modified our knowledge test interpreter program to take maximum advantage of existing foreign language written exams in our digital testing system, while minimizing risks inherent with allowing customers to provide their own interpreters.

From February 1st through July 31st of this year, non-citizens taking a non-CDL knowledge test using any method (digital, interpreter, etc.) passed at a 45% rate, compared to 69% for US citizens. These data points are independent of spoken language and include some non-citizens who elect to take the knowledge test in English through our digital testing system.

Citizen vs Non-Citizen Written Exam Pass Rate, Feb-Jul 2026									
LP Status	Result	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Totals	Pass %
Non-Citizen	Fail	100	246	238	169	235	96	1084	45%
	Pass	105	182	199	129	190	92	897	
	Total Attempts							1981	
Citizen	Fail	111	206	216	162	225	95	1015	69%
	Pass	298	421	475	348	525	182	2249	
	Total Attempts							3264	
Grand Total		614	1055	1128	808	1175	465	5245	60%

As part of the procedural changes, we now require all applicants who request a language provided in our digital knowledge testing system to take their test on the computer. Interpreters are no longer permitted in these languages. Had we not taken this step, we would have incurred roughly \$51,000 in interpreter costs for the 853 foreign language applicants, based on a nominal \$60/hour billing rate for professional interpreter services (not including mileage or higher rates for unique languages).

Additionally, on February 1st, BMV launched a centrally controlled interpreter program for applicants who speak a language not offered in our digital testing system. Under the leadership of an existing, seasoned License Examiner, arrangements were made with 3 professional interpreter businesses licensed to work with the State of Maine. An Examiner proctors each in-person exam event where an interpreter is provided to ensure a professional event.

Since February, this professional Examiner also engineered a “bulk” solution that allows a single interpreter to administer a written test to multiple applicants in the same session, minimizing travel and hourly charges. In this initial 6-month period, 25 events were scheduled as group or “bulk” events, saving roughly \$1,500.

We remain at your service to ensure that you have the information you need to fulfill your mission of oversight.

Sincerely,

Catherine Curtis

Catherine Curtis
Deputy Secretary of State
Bureau of Motor Vehicles

