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Legislative Document

No. 1226

S.P. 417

In Senate, March 30, 2017

**An Act To Keep Maine's Transportation Infrastructure Safe by
Providing More Sources of Revenue for the Highway Fund**

Submitted by the Department of Transportation pursuant to Joint Rule 204.
Reference to the Committee on Transportation suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Heather J.R. Priest'.

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator COLLINS of York.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §501, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 206, §4, is further
3 amended to read:

4 **1. Automobiles; pickup trucks.** The fee for an automobile, a pickup truck
5 registered for 6,000 pounds or less or a sport utility vehicle used for the conveyance of
6 passengers or interchangeably for passengers or property is \$35 except that the fee for a
7 hybrid vehicle is \$250 and the fee for an electric vehicle is \$350. The fee for a pickup
8 truck registered for more than 6,000 pounds but no more than 10,000 pounds is \$37.

9 As used in this subsection, "hybrid vehicle" means a motor vehicle that uses 2 or more
10 distinct types of power for purposes of propulsion.

11 As used in this subsection, "electric vehicle" means a vehicle that uses one or more
12 electric motors for propulsion.

13 An automobile or sport utility vehicle used for the conveyance of passengers or property
14 is a "combination" vehicle and may be issued a special plate with the word "combination"
15 instead of "Vacationland." A passenger vehicle used under contract with the State, a
16 municipality or a school district to transport students must be designated as
17 "combination." A vehicle owned or operated by parents or legal guardians is exempt
18 from this subsection.

19 Commercial plates may not be issued for or displayed on an automobile.

20 A sport utility vehicle may be registered either as an automobile or a truck. A sport
21 utility vehicle with a gross vehicle weight or combined gross vehicle weight in excess of
22 10,000 pounds and used in the furtherance of a commercial enterprise must be registered
23 as a truck according to its actual gross weight as provided in section 504.

24 The gross weight of a pickup truck registered as provided by this subsection may not
25 exceed 10,000 pounds. An owner of a pickup truck who operates the pickup truck with a
26 gross weight in excess of 10,000 pounds or the pickup truck drawing a semitrailer with a
27 combined gross weight in excess of 10,000 pounds must register the truck as provided in
28 section 504.

29 A combination of vehicles consisting of a motor vehicle and a camp trailer is not required
30 to be registered for the gross weight of the combination.

31 Beginning July 1, 2009, \$10 of the fee must be transferred on a quarterly basis by the
32 Treasurer of State to the TransCap Trust Fund established by Title 30-A, section 6006-G.

33 **Sec. 2. 36 MRSA §1489**, as amended by PL 1985, c. 459, Pt. C, §12, is further
34 amended to read:

35 **§1489. Crediting and apportionment of tax received**

36 **1. Municipal excise tax account.** In municipalities the treasurer shall credit money
37 received from excise taxes to an excise tax account, ~~from which it may~~ and, except as
38 provided in subsection 3, funds from that account must be appropriated by the

1 municipality ~~for any purpose for which a municipality may appropriate money for~~
2 ~~maintenance or improvement of transportation infrastructure.~~

3 **3. Portion for Highway Fund.** The treasurer, in municipalities, and the Secretary of
4 State or agents appointed by the Secretary of State with respect to the unorganized
5 territory, shall deposit the excise tax collected pursuant to section 1484, subsection 3 on
6 trucks or truck tractors that haul trailers and that are registered for more than 26,000
7 pounds to the Highway Fund. If a treasurer in a municipality or the Secretary of State
8 with respect to the unorganized territory fails to make the deposit required by this
9 subsection, the Department of Transportation may withhold payments due a municipality
10 or county pursuant to Title 23, section 1803-B.

11 SUMMARY

12 This bill identifies 3 revenue sources to increase funding to the Highway Fund for
13 transportation infrastructure.

14 This bill:

15 1. Imposes an annual registration fee of \$250 on hybrid vehicles and \$350 on electric
16 vehicles instead of the annual \$35 fee imposed on other passenger vehicles;

17 2. Requires municipalities to spend revenue they collect from excise taxes on
18 transportation projects within their municipality; and

19 3. Diverts from municipalities to the Highway Fund the excise tax collected on
20 trucks and truck tractors that haul trailers.