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February 23, 2023

Senator Anne Beebe-Center, Chair
Representative Suzanne Salisbury
Committee on Criminal Justice & Public Safety
100 State House Station Room 436
Augusta, ME 04330

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and Members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee:

RE: LD 429 – An Act to Reclassify Certain Offenses Under the Motor Vehicle Laws and Increase the Efficiency of the Criminal Justice System

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary,

MACDL supports LD 429. This bill reduces a number of very minor motor vehicles offenses from crimes to traffic infractions. All of the crimes are very minor crimes in the first place, and reducing them to traffic infractions makes sense, especially in light of the massive court backlog that has to deal with criminal cases in a more substantive way, whereas traffic infractions are dealt with in a streamlined process that takes a fraction of the court time.

MACDL urges this Committee to take a serious look at this bill as, if nothing else, a remedy to the backlog in the courts. But even separate from that, this bill just makes sense because all of these offenses noted in the bill are minor offenses from the start and making them a traffic infraction instead of a crime which makes someone a “convicted criminal” for a minor offense would be appropriate.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this issue.

Sincerely,

Walter F. McKee
Chair, Legislative Committee