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**TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE ASSOCIATION OF PLANNERS  
TO THE JOINT STANDING  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY PROVIDED IN FAVOR OF LD #1634  
"An Act to Grant Municipalities the Authority to Set Certain Lower Motor Vehicle  
Speed Limits Without a Department of Transportation Speed Study"**

**DATE OF HEARING: Tuesday, April 25, 2023**

**Honorable Senator Chipman, Honorable Representative Williams, Distinguished  
Members of the Committee on Transportation:**

The Maine Association of Planners strongly supports LD #1634 to allow reduced speed limits. This bill will empower municipalities to create a more sustainable transportation system within their communities. It would remove an unneeded barrier to reduced speed zones by eliminating the requirement for expensive, time consuming, and potentially counterproductive speed studies.

Research<sup>1</sup> shows that crashes with vulnerable road users - bicyclists and pedestrians - at speeds above 25 miles per hour are far more likely to result in fatal injuries than are slower speed crashes. Unsafe motorist behavior is a major reason people don't walk or bike to destinations, even ones that are close by, in their communities.

Maine's climate change plan, "Maine Won't Wait" calls for reducing our carbon footprint and dependence on fossil fuels for transportation in the state. Increasing the share of trips made by walking or bicycling is crucial for meeting this goal. Reducing vehicle speeds, by lowering speed limits, is a tool Maine's municipalities should be given by passing this legislation.

We appreciate your time and attention to this legislation, and would be happy to answer any planning-related questions you may have regarding this bill.

Sincerely,  
Maine Association of Planners Legislative Policy Committee

<sup>1</sup> National Association of City Transportation Officials, 2018 "Speed Kills"  
<https://nacto.org/publication/city-limits/the-need/speed-kills/>

