



May 2, 2023

Testimony Neither For Nor Against LD 932 An Act Requiring Climate Impact Notes on Proposed Transportation Legislation and Agency Rules

Greetings Chairs Senator Chipman and Representative Williams and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee.

My name is Jean Sideris, Executive 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 testimony on LD 932 “An Act Requiring Climate Impact Notes on Proposed Transportation Legislation and Agency Rules.” The BCM is Neither For Nor Against this legislation.

Climate change is already affecting Maine’s economy, residents, and way of life. Without deep reductions in emissions, we can anticipate that rising sea levels, more frequent natural disasters, and increasing temperatures will negatively affect all aspects of our livelihood from infrastructure to tourism to public health. Maine has a strong, bipartisan framework in place for tackling climate change: we have greenhouse gas emissions obligations requiring 45% gross reductions by 2030, 80% by 2050, and net-zero emissions by 2045.

As transportation accounts for more than half of Maine’s emissions, better understanding the potential emissions and impacts that may result from the implementation of proposed legislation could help the legislature and the people of Maine make informed decisions about transportation projects and priorities.

With the creation of the Statewide Active Transportation Plan and increased focus on walkable/bikeable communities through programs like the Village Partnership Initiative, the Maine Department of Transportation is taking important steps to shift our transportation system from single-occupancy vehicles to more sustainable transportation modes like transit and active transportation. There is much more work to be done, however.

According to the US Department of Transportation, 59% of all trips taken in Maine in 2021 were 5 miles or less. This demonstrates that Maine has enormous potential to shift away from short driving trips and replace them with transit, biking, or walking.



We recognize the value of accounting for the climate impact of transportation, however we do not yet know the fiscal implications or feasibility of enacting such a process at this time. We encourage further discussion, more study of models from other states who have enacted such policy, and deeper engagement and transparency from the Department of Transportation about the climate impact of their projects.

At this time, the BCM is Neither For Nor Against this bill.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean Sideris". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jean Sideris
Executive Director
Bicycle Coalition of Maine