



Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

In Opposition To

LD 478– An Act to Reduce Maximum Speeds on Roads Close to Residences

February 27, 2025

Sen. Nangle, Rep. Crafts, and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee, my name is Rebecca Graham, and I am submitting testimony in opposition to LD 478 at the direction of MMA's Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). Our LPC is made up of individuals from across Maine with municipal officials elected by their peers across Maine's 35 Senate districts representing communities with very different access to available enforcement resources and local capacity.

Complaints to municipal officials regarding the high rate of speeds where vehicles are operating particularly in urbanized areas, are consistently received at town offices across the state. The Association and its members understand the intent behind the policy initiative proposed by this bill. Municipal officials are unable to adjust speed limits. even where they are obviously out of sync with neighborhood desire without a speed study conducted by the Department of Transportation (DOT) and a corresponding concurrence of neighborhood desire. In some cases, the posted speed limit on dense residential areas is higher than the highly traveled DOT designated major routes they feed into.

Contextual flexibility to assign speed limits should be considered by the legislature.

However as drafted, the public way designation has no beginning or end and may impact very rural routes where a single house exists. These include scenic byways, historic transportation routes outside a village, and may unnecessarily include many rural roads out of sync with the urbanized densely populated areas this bill may be attempting to address.

For these reasons, officials ask the committee to provide greater flexibility for municipalities to addressing speed limit concerns where a neighborhood has expressed deep concerns around the posted limit and operating speeds. Should the committee propose moving this effort forward, officials ask that greater consideration of how the 15-foot set back for a single home could impact large transportation routes unnecessarily and consider additional triggers before a speed limit is introduced. Many of these impacted routes could cause significant safety hazards caused by a dramatic reduction in speed in the presence of a home so narrowly defined.