

Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

In Support for

LD 1057 – Resolve, to Aid Municipalities, Animal Control Officers and Other Parties in Complying with Electronic Dog Licensing Requirements

March 25, 2025

Sen. Talbot Ross, Rep. Pluecker and distinguished members of the Agriculture Conservation and Forestry Committee, my name is Rebecca Graham, and I am providing testimony in support for LD 1057, 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.

While enacted in 2021, a bill to create a new dog licensing process through a state level database was not fully implemented until last year, causing significant havoc for the duties of municipal clerks right in the middle of elections. Officials understand the need and goals of a centralized database but the roll out and adoption left little wiggle room to support municipalities already using purchased models for the task that not only allowed for faster licensing but used existing local processes. Municipalities who had spent significant amounts of money on additional models to streamline their workload now have a two-step process that means they may use their existing TRIO-based software for registering dogs but also need to report through a more cumbersome portal to provide the information to the state.

Officials expressed concerns that the horse has already left the barn on this process, but desire to have a review of how the state system can either better integrate with existing local processes or be reviewed for its fit for intended purpose. For these reasons, officials support the effort presented by LD 1057 and encourage the committee to connect with the clerks who have the best ability to share what engagement has already occurred with the department, and what ways they may need more legislative direction to address the current issues.