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MAINE PROSECUTORS ASSOCIATION SHIRA BURNS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**“An Act to Eliminate Barriers to Reentry into the Community After Incarceration by Repealing
Certain Driver’s License Suspension Provisions”
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
Public Hearing Date: April 7, 2025
Testimony in SUPPORT of LD 421**

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Shira Burns and I represent the Maine Prosecutors Association. I submit this testimony in support of LD 421.

Prosecutors around the State constantly make prosecutorial decisions using the tools given to us by the legislature and the Court to uphold public safety and victim safety. Having access to these different tools and the flexibility to use them is imperative in our operations to assess every case individually. That being said, this bill repeals a law that prosecutors don’t utilize and do not see the benefit of utilizing.

There are many defendants that commit crime, serve their sentence, and go on to be productive members of society. This productivity can be closely tied to access to transportation which might have to be self-transportation. We cannot find any data that suggests a person that has been convicted of these drug crimes pose a higher risk to citizens on the road than other defendants. We cannot find any data that suggests suspending these licenses will stop further crime for those that choose to continue their behavior.

This law is also inconsistent with other statutes where a motor vehicle was used to facilitate a crime. A lot of crimes are facilitated with the utilization of a motor vehicle (burglary, robbery, theft, etc.), but there is no penalty that the defendant’s driver’s license be suspended. License suspensions are mostly directed at keeping unsafe drivers off the road. We support these suspensions for dangerous drivers, including anyone that is impaired by alcohol or drugs.

For these reason, the Maine Prosecutors Association is in support of LD 421.