



BICYCLE COALITION OF MAINE

Testimony of Andrew Zarro, Executive Director, Bicycle Coalition of Maine In Support of LD 1292: An Act Clarifying the Contributions of the MTA to the State Highway Fund

April 8, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation,

My name is Andrew Zarro, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine. Our organization works statewide to make Maine better for biking and walking through education, advocacy, and community-building. We also serve as the leading voice for active transportation, safety, and mobility choices for all Mainers.

I am writing today in strong support of LD 1292.

This bill represents a crucial step toward a more equitable, fiscally responsible, and multimodal transportation system for Maine. It addresses a longstanding imbalance between the Maine Turnpike Authority's independence and the broader transportation needs of the state.

LD 1292 is important because:

- It closes critical funding gaps in the Highway Fund using surplus toll revenue, much of which is paid by out-of-state drivers, rather than raising taxes or fees on Maine residents.
- It supports transportation equity. Commuters in regions north of Portland continue to bear a disproportionate burden of toll costs, while other Mainers travel toll-free. Redirecting surplus funds to the Highway Fund helps ensure fairer investment in infrastructure statewide.
- It prioritizes sensible investments over sprawl. The MTA's historical and ongoing focus on highway expansion, such as the proposed Gorham Connector, threatens rural landscapes, encourages more driving, and works against Maine's climate and livability goals.
- It improves accountability. The bill reins in unchecked borrowing and spending by the MTA, aligning decisions more closely with the Sensible Transportation Policy Act and statewide priorities set by Maine DOT.
- It protects transportation choices. Every dollar overspent on unnecessary Turnpike expansions is a dollar not available for safer streets, bike and pedestrian infrastructure, transit access, or essential bridge and road maintenance.

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine urges the Committee to support LD 1292 as a common-sense measure that better aligns toll revenue with Maine's shared values: sustainability, fiscal prudence, and mobility for all.

Thank you for your time and for your work on behalf of Maine's transportation future. I am happy to assist the committee in any way I can.

Sincerely,

Andrew Zarro
Executive Director, Bicycle Coalition of Maine

Andrew Zarro
Portland
LD 1292

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