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LD 1515

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100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

In Support of LD 1515 – An Act to Exempt Wheelchair Adapted Vehicles from the Sales and Use Tax

Good Afternoon, Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and members of the Taxation Committee,

My name is Brian, and I am submitting this written testimony in support of LD 1515, “An Act to Exempt Wheelchair Adapted Vehicles from the Sales and Use Tax.”

I’ve had my driver’s license for 15 years, and I use hand controls to drive due to my disability. I live in an urban part of Maine where some resources are available, but even here, the process of becoming a driver and maintaining an adapted vehicle is expensive and complicated. I had to pay \$500 just for an assessment to figure out what kind of adaptive equipment I needed—and that was before any modifications were actually made.

The hand controls I use now are a very basic setup, and they still cost over \$1,000 out of pocket. Vehicle modification shops often charge over \$100 per hour for labor. These costs add up fast, and for many people with disabilities—especially those living on fixed incomes—this can be a huge barrier to independence.

I’d also like to urge you to consider people with disabilities who live in rural areas of Maine. In places where public transportation is not an option, owning an adapted vehicle is often the only way to get to work, medical appointments, the grocery store, or community events. For many, it's the difference between being part of their community or being isolated.

LD 1515 would help offset the overwhelming costs associated with purchasing and modifying a vehicle for wheelchair access. Removing the sales tax is a small step that can have a big impact—giving more people the chance to live and travel independently.

This bill is about more than money. It’s about mobility, dignity, and equal opportunity. I strongly urge you to support LD 1515.

Thank you for your time and for considering the real, everyday needs of Mainers with disabilities.

Sincerely,
Brian Harnish
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