

Regina Bowie
Presque Isle
LD 1515

April 23, 2025

100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

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

Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry, and Members of the Committee on Taxation, My name is Regina, and I'm speaking today in support of LD 1515, which would remove the sales and use tax on wheelchair-adapted vehicles.

I believe this bill is really important because people who use wheelchairs already face higher costs when it comes to transportation and mobility. Vehicles that are adapted for wheelchair users or people with physical disabilities can be extremely expensive, and that includes the modifications—things like hand controls, ramps, and specialized equipment. These aren't luxuries—they're necessities for people who want to live their lives and get around safely.

It's not just about getting in and out of the vehicle—it's also about being able to operate it safely. People need adaptive equipment that includes things like hand controls and good brake control, especially for those who may not have full use of their legs. This is critical for safe driving. In some cases, visual or auditory supports are also needed to help the person operate the vehicle confidently and independently. I also believe this exemption should apply to both drivers and passengers. Some people, like my friend Kevin, need to remain in their wheelchair while riding in the vehicle, even though they don't drive. Others might have partial paralysis and are still able to drive, but only with special equipment to help them do it safely and comfortably.

These vehicles and modifications are expensive. Removing the sales tax would make a big difference in helping people afford what they need. It would help more people with disabilities get access to transportation, be more independent, and connect with their communities—just like everyone else.

I truly hope you support this bill and help make life more accessible and safe for Mainers with disabilities.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Regina Bowie

Presque Isle, ME

crystalunicorn73@spectrum.net