

David Lawrence  
Portland  
LD 1515

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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 David, and I live in Portland. I'm writing today to express my support for LD 1515, a bill to exempt wheelchair-adapted vehicles from the sales and use tax.

This bill is important to me because I have a disability and drive a modified vehicle. While I am not currently in a wheelchair, I know people who are, and I understand how essential accessible vehicles are to independence and mobility. Whether you're in a wheelchair or need hand controls, modified vehicles come with very high costs beyond the price of the car itself.

For example, my current vehicle has a left-foot accelerator and a steering knob to help me drive. That setup alone added about \$1,800 to the cost of my car. It's a big expense, and I know others pay even more—especially when full wheelchair access or lifts are needed.

Many people with disabilities rely on fixed incomes like Social Security or SSDI. It doesn't make sense to charge sales tax on something that is not a luxury, but a necessity. Taking away the sales tax on these kinds of vehicles would help people afford safe, appropriate transportation and stretch their limited income further. It's not just about getting around—it's about staying independent, getting to work, visiting friends, and participating in the community.

I would also like to suggest that this bill be expanded in the future to include all modified vehicles—not just ones adapted for wheelchair access. There are many of us with different physical needs who require other types of adaptive equipment to drive safely. If we're investing in accessibility, we should recognize all types of vehicle modifications that support people with disabilities.

This bill is a step in the right direction toward making life more affordable and accessible. I hope you will support LD 1515 and consider how we can keep building on it to help more Mainers live independently.

Thank you for your time and for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,  
David Lawrence, SUFU Member  
Portland, Maine