



May 1, 2025

RE: **Testimony of Build Maine IN SUPPORT of LD 1756**, An Act to Establish a Statewide Transportation Project Selection Prioritization Process

Dear Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Members of the Joint Select Committee on Transportation,

My name is Kara, and I am the Chair of Build Maine. We are a statewide group working to align fiscal, economic, environmental, and quality of life goals within our state through pragmatic and common-sense solutions that strengthen villages, towns, and cities across Maine.

Build Maine supports LD 1756, which proposes to establish a transparent project selection process for all new transportation projects funded by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA). This bill will ensure that taxpayer dollars are put to the best possible use by establishing a transparent rubric to score new transportation projects and prioritize investments accordingly.

Current project selection relies only on reducing travel delays, which may not equate to the overall benefit of a project. While efficiently connecting people to jobs and services should be a top priority, we also must prioritize safety, the economy of our communities, and the impacts of our quality of place and environment.

Our current system has no way to compare the economic impact of transportation investments or evaluate the environmental costs when deciding where to allocate scarce funds. Creating a consistent set of standards will help us develop our transportation system while minimizing externalized costs that work at odds with other important State and local goals.

This new project selection process will take the politics out of transportation investments and ensure that the transportation decisions are made objectively. This would ensure that projects with the most benefit for Maine's people, economy, and environment are funded first. Aligning investments with performance outcomes will save the state money in the long run, while also helping municipalities advance local goals around expanding quality of life, like increasing walkability and making it easier for residents to age in place safely.

Sincerely,

Kara Wilbur, Chair
Build Maine

BUILD MAINE

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