



BICYCLE COALITION OF MAINE

Public Testimony in Support of LD 287

An Act to Require and Encourage Safe and Interconnected Transportation Construction Projects

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Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation:

My name is Andrew Zarro, and I serve as Executive Director of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, a statewide nonprofit working to make Maine's roads safer and more accessible for people of all ages and abilities who walk, bike, and use active transportation.

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine is generally aligned with the intention of LD 287, and we appreciate the committee's attention to safety, connectivity, and the long-term impacts of transportation investments. Investing in active transportation policies is smart, safe, and necessary. It supports economic vitality, smart growth, and public health, and it is a key component of achieving the Active Transportation goals outlined in the Maine Won't Wait Climate Action Plan.

At the same time, I want to be clear that this bill is not a simple or automatic yes for us. While we agree with the concept and direction of LD 287, there are still many unknowns about how it would be implemented in practice, and those unknowns matter.

Transportation policy succeeds or fails based on execution. Questions such as how projects are evaluated, how safety and connectivity metrics are defined, and how compliance is measured will ultimately determine whether this bill delivers meaningful outcomes or simply adds process without impact. We believe it is important to ask how these metrics were selected, whether they are grounded in best practices, and how they will be applied consistently across diverse contexts in Maine.

Current language ties its requirements to a \$500,000 project cost threshold. While this approach is understandable, many Complete Streets and safety-focused projects fall



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below that amount, particularly in rural communities and village centers. We encourage the committee to consider whether safety-critical projects could be unintentionally excluded and whether cost alone is the best proxy for impact or risk.

As written, the bill applies to MaineDOT and to municipalities working on state and state aid highways. We believe that approach makes sense, but additional clarity would be helpful to ensure roles, responsibilities, and expectations are clearly understood by all parties involved.

We also want to acknowledge that MaineDOT has already taken steps in this direction. The department's updated Complete Streets policy already requires municipal engagement and collaboration. In many ways, LD 287 builds on that progress. The challenge and the opportunity will be ensuring that active transportation is treated as a core component of project development, not as an outlier or a secondary consideration.

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine wants this bill to work. Making it successful will require close collaboration with MaineDOT, municipalities, engineers, planners, public health professionals, disability advocates, and community stakeholders. It will require clear guidance, realistic implementation pathways, and measurable goals that focus on safety outcomes rather than checklists.

Our support is rooted in a desire to see this legislation result in safer roads, better connections, and fewer serious and fatal crashes. We stand ready to work with the committee and our partners to refine this bill so that it delivers on its promise and advances a transportation system that works for all Maine people.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions.

