



STATE OF MAINE  
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Maine State Police  
Traffic Safety Unit  
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**Testimony of Lt. Bruce Scott**

**IN SUPPORT OF LD 1901**

**An Act To Amend the Laws Prohibiting the Use of Handheld Phones  
and Devices While Driving**

Senator Diamond, Representative McLean and distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Lt. Bruce Scott, and I am the Commanding Officer of the State Police Traffic Safety Unit. I am here today to testify on behalf of the Department of Public Safety and the Maine State Police in Support of LD 1901.

This bill if passed would make the necessary changes to the fine amounts to reflect the original legislative intent of this committee to create a relatively low fine on a first offense but a substantially higher fine for a second and subsequent offense. It is often a deterrent for law enforcement officers to issue a summons if they feel the fine is too high for the level of egregiousness of the violation. This bill would ensure that ticketed offenders get a relatively low fine for a first offense and serve as a fair warning that subsequent offenses will not be tolerated. This will give police officers a chance to educate the public while taking a softer approach for first time offenders. I believe this will better accomplish the goal of the committee to create a safer driving culture on Maine's roads while minimally affecting the livelihood of those cited for a violation of the "Hands free law."

This bill will also remove the technical language that specifically exempts certain types of two-way radios and broadens the definition to simply exempt all two-way radios. This change makes it much easier to enforce the law and reduce the confusion created by the very technical federal definitions that were previously referenced in the statute.

Most importantly, this bill adds "parking areas" to where the use of a handheld device and texting are prohibited while operating a motor vehicle. This change will prohibit the very dangerous practice of using a mobile telephone or an electronic handheld device while driving through a parking lot, which at times can be heavily congested with vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and children playing.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote in favor of LD 1901.

On behalf of the Department of Public Safety and the Maine State Police, I thank you for your time and would be happy to try and answer any questions that you might have.