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**Testimony of Karen Doyle
Maine Department of Transportation
Before the 131st Legislature, Joint Standing Committee on Transportation**

In Opposition to LD 527

***An Act to Allow Municipalities to Create Bicycle and Pedestrian Zones with
Reduced Speed Limits***

Senator Chipman, Representative Williams and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, I am Karen Doyle, Director of Finance and Administration for the Maine Department of Transportation. MaineDOT respectfully opposes LD 527, *An Act to Allow Municipalities to Create Bicycle and Pedestrian Zones with Reduced Speed Limits*. I want to start by noting that the bill's sponsor has expressed interest in meeting with MaineDOT officials to discuss potential amendments to the bill's language. We are always happy to meet with legislators about their legislation and concerns and we intend to schedule such a meeting before the work session for this bill.

MaineDOT works closely with communities with programs like our Village Partnership Initiative to ensure downtowns are safe and accessible for all road users. However, this bill in its current form would lead to issues related to both safety and engineering.

LD 527 proposes a new sub-section within 29-A MRSA §2075. It proposes to allow a municipality to create a bicycle and pedestrian speed zone on roadways where there is an annual daily traffic count of 6,000 motor vehicles or less. The bill allows for a municipality to set the speed limit in that zone to 25 miles per hour, without conducting a speed study.

MaineDOT is the agency responsible for setting speed limits on both state and town roads with the approval of the Maine State Police. However, 29-A MRSA §2075 gives municipalities the authority to set speed limits on local roads should they wish to assume the responsibility. According to the existing statute, if a municipality decides to take on this responsibility, they must notify MaineDOT and provide written notice of the speeds they set. In the last 20 years, four municipalities have requested this authority from MaineDOT, all four have since given back the responsibility to the department.