



STATE OF MAINE
Department of Public Safety
Maine State Police
Traffic Safety Unit
State House Station 20
Augusta, Maine
04333-0020

JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

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COMMISSIONER

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CHIEF

LT. COL. BRIAN P. SCOTT
DEPUTY CHIEF

Testimony of Lt. Bruce Scott
IN SUPPORT OF LD 429

An Act to Reclassify Certain Offenses Under the Motor Vehicle Laws and Increase the Efficiency of the Criminal Justice System

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury and distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Lt. Bruce Scott, and I am the Commanding Officer of the Maine 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 429.

As many of you know, the Maine State Police, the Maine Warden Service, the Maine Prosecutor's Association and the Secretary of State's Office worked with multiple stake holders to help build consensus on LD 1604. That bill attempted to decriminalize several Title 12 Fish and Game offenses as well as numerous Title 29-A offenses. That bill passed through the House and Senate last year, but due to a fiscal note it died. This bill will essentially have the same effect, except that LD 429 only addresses the Title 29-A offenses (traffic laws).

This bill allows certain laws in Title 29-A to be decriminalized that don't have a safety nexus and will help streamline court processes, without compromising traffic safety.

We would recommend a slight amendment to this bill that would provide authority for law enforcement to tow a vehicle when necessary and appropriate to keep traffic moving safely when the operator of a vehicle is charged with the newly

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formed traffic violation of Operating with a suspended registration. It is also my understanding that the Secretary of State's Office recommends an additional amendment that will keep the most egregious types of suspensions a class E crime. We have reviewed their amendment and agree that the language should be added to this bill. It is my understanding that these amendments will be added to the bill, if they were not already added over the weekend. With those amendments, I am proud to say that the Department of Public Safety and the Maine State Police fully support this bill.

I would also like to make sure that you are aware of LD 819, An Act to Reduce the Penalty for Operating a Motor Vehicle Under a Suspended License in Certain Situations will be heard at the Transportation Committee and will have the same effect on OAS violations as this bill. Perhaps the sponsors of these two bills could work together to determine how to best move forward.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote in favor of 429.

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.

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