



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
MICHAEL SAUSCHUCK
COMMISSIONER

COL. WILLIAM ROSS
CHIEF
LT. COL. BRIAN P. SCOTT
DEPUTY CHIEF

Testimony of Lt. Bruce Scott

AGAINST LD 746

An Act to Modernize the State's Vehicle Inspection System by Requiring Inspections Biennially and Allowing for an Electronic Inspection Program

Senator Chipman, Rep. Williams, 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 Opposition of LD 746.

While the modernization portion of this bill is desirable, it is coupled with a 2-year inspection program. We do not want to compromise safety to increase efficiency and streamline processes. While there are many advantages to allowing the State Police to adopt an electronic inspection program, none outweigh the harm that would be caused by weakening the current inspection program. We have testified for years against a 2-year inspection program due to considerable safety concerns. Approximately 25% of all vehicles fail an annual inspection in Maine, meaning there would be around 325,000 defective vehicles on the road today that would go un-inspected for another year. If this bill were to pass, the Maine State Police would have to increase the minimum safety standards to help ensure that

INTEGRITY * FAIRNESS * COMPASSION * EXCELLENCE

Offices located at: 36 Hospital Street, Augusta Maine
(207) 624-8939 (Voice) (888) 524-7900 (TDD) (207) 624-8945 (Fax)

vehicles remain safe for two years, which would lead to an overall increase of costs in vehicle ownership.

Under this bill, emergency vehicles, some tow trucks, taxicabs, Ubers, limousines, rental vehicles, delivery service vehicles and other vehicles used in commerce but under 10,001 pounds, would not need to be inspected for two years. Some of these vehicles can accumulate 50,000 miles a year or more and are driven in the worst of conditions and at times with little to no maintenance. Meaning some vehicles will travel more than 100,000 miles without being inspected, yet many wear items on a vehicle are not designed to last even 60 thousand miles, some components like tires and brakes can wear even faster.

There would also be a fiscal note that you may want to be aware of. The sale of inspection stickers results in approximately 3.5 million dollars in annual Highway Fund revenue. We currently pay about 15 cents per inspection sticker and sell them to dealers new car dealers for \$3.50 and all other stations at \$2.50 each. Selling half as many inspection stickers in the first year would result in a reduction in revenue of approximately 1.5 million dollars. In addition to this reduction in revenue you may want to consult with DEP to determine how this would affect the carbon credits that Maine receives for having an annual emissions inspection in Cumberland County, which makes our state eligible for millions of federal dollars annually. If vehicles are no longer required to be inspected annually in Cumberland County, we run the high risk of backsliding and being forced to make up these credits elsewhere or lose millions in federal funding.

I ask this committee to consider the risk versus the reward while deliberating on this bill. The risk in weakening the inspection laws by decreasing the frequency at which new vehicles are inspected may increase the number of defect related crashes on Maine roads resulting in property damage, injury or even death for the minimal reward of saving up to \$6.25 per year for vehicle owners.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote "Ought Not To Pass" on LD 746

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.

INTEGRITY * FAIRNESS * COMPASSION * EXCELLENCE

Offices located at: 36 Hospital Street, Augusta Maine
(207) 624-8939 (Voice) (888) 524-7900 (TDD) (207) 624-8945 (Fax)