



May 2, 2023

Testimony of Erin Courtney, Maine Turnpike Authority
Before the 131st Legislature, Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

In Opposition of LD 932

An Act Requiring Climate Impact Notes on Proposed Transportation Legislation and Agency Rules

Senator Chipman, Representative Williams and distinguished members of Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Erin Courtney and I am the Public Outreach Manager and Legislative Liaison for the Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA). Maine Turnpike Authority is testifying today in opposition to LD 932.

This bill would require a climate impact note on every rule proposed by a state agency and all legislation referred to Joint Standing Committee on Transportation. The statement must include an estimate in pounds of the amount of carbon dioxide, methane and any other pollutant that may be emitted and how the amount of any pollutant may change over time and an analysis of the anticipated effects of any significant environmental changes and any significant secondary or indirect effects, including effects on the State's economy or public health, that may result from the implementation of the proposed law.

To produce these emission calculations is complicated and dependent on many factors that could be subject to argument. With the addition of all the other "secondary" factors such as effects on the economy and public health, this task gets even more complicated and, worse, much more subjective. Especially when you look at more complex bills, such as the MaineDOT's and Maine Turnpike Authority's budgets, this task would be immense to correctly calculate--assuming it is in the capacity of our legislative staff to do at all.

This leads to concern about the impact this bill will have on the legislative process. Creating this level of additional work for the Office of Fiscal and Program Review (OFPR) and Office of Policy and Legal Analysis (OPLA) staff will slow down the legislative process considerably. During a session where more than 2,000 bills were submitted, and bills are still being printed in May, it is easy to think about what adding this level of bureaucracy would do to the process. The committee is always free to ask for more information on the impacts of a particular bill from legislative staff, and it should be left to the committee to manage its own workflow by determining what bills require a "deep dive" into their implications and which ones do not.

Because we find this bill overly complicated and burdensome to the legislative process, we respectfully urge the committee to vote ought not to pass on LD 932.

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