



**Department of the Secretary of State  
Bureau of Motor Vehicles**

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**TESTIMONY OF  
SHENNA BELLOWS, SECRETARY OF STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE**

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

March 7, 2024

**L.D. 2229, An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, Highway Fund and Other Funds and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025.**

Senator Chipman, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Shenna Bellows, and I am the Secretary of State. I am here today to present testimony in support of those items presented in the 2024 Supplemental Budget for the Department of the Secretary of State.

As you know, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) was established to serve the people of Maine and advance motor vehicle safety by licensing drivers and registering vehicles. The BMV is responsible for licensing and monitoring drivers, registering and titling vehicles, licensing driver education schools and instructors, licensing vehicle and trailer dealers and managing all motor carrier programs. Through the collection of the licensing and registration fees associated with these services, the BMV also provides revenue to build and maintain Maine's bridges and highways. We are proud that in FY23, we generated \$119,693,426 for the Highway Fund.

The bureau serves the public at the main office in Augusta and 13 branch office locations throughout the State and through a suite of online services. Moreover, 516 municipalities and 12 non-governmental agents offer registration services to the people of Maine.

Additional funding of the BMV would allow continued and expanded services to the people of Maine.

There are ten Highway Fund Initiatives beginning on page 4 of the Committee document.

**Administration – Motor Vehicles 0077**

1. Provides funding for required structural repairs needed for the license plate production facility at the Bolduc Correctional Facility. While the Committee document shows this as All Other, the request should be for Capital Expenditures as requested and recommended in the Governor's budget is \$150,000 in FY2024-25.

This initiative is no longer needed as it has become clear the plate shop is in need of extensive repairs, with more issues being identified every year. We are going to need to have some conversations about the long-term future of the plate shop, but that is not before you today.

2. Provides funding for the approved reorganization of one Motor Vehicle Detective position to a Senior Motor Vehicle Detective position and adjusts funding for related All Other costs. The Personal Services request is **\$16,646** and the All Other request is **\$794 in FY2024-25**.

The establishment of the Cyber Crime and Identity Theft Unit has created the need for an additional supervisory position for the unit. As technology systems advance, this means bad actors will also be adapting to usurp new systems and programs. Therefore, additional staff trained with expertise in cyber crime and identity threat attempts is necessary to ensure the data and information of Maine people is kept safe. This initiative seeks to reclassify one Motor Vehicle Detective position to a Senior Motor Vehicle Detective to meet the need. This management initiated reclass was approved by the Bureau of Human Resources on 6-6-2023.

3. Establishes one Public Service Executive II position and provides funding for related All Other costs. The Personal Services request is **\$153,936** and the All Other request is **\$19,083 in FY2024-25**.

This position will be responsible for leading the Human Resources Division within the Department of the Secretary of State. In evaluating our employee recruitment, hiring, training and retention practices, we have realized the need for leadership in human resources to more efficiently and strategically hire and train the next generation of employees. The responsibilities will include supporting the BMV's strategic plan and ensuring staff have the necessary skills to reach Mainers where they are, via a method that suits them, which is our main effort. To ensure our customer-centric services are reliable, we must recruit, train, and retain exceptional employees. Over time, our team will need to transition from manually processing paper to analyzing data, searching for trends, and cross-training to build resiliency. The Division Director for Human Resources will be responsible for ensuring that we're bringing in the people we need to get the job done.

4. Provides funding for the ongoing contract expenses for the branch office scheduling software for customer appointments. The All Other request is **\$6,810 in FY2023-24** and **\$16,344 in FY2024-25**.

Per unit customer notification charges for the BMV branch office scheduling system are increasing January 1, 2024. This service provides direct text messages to customers via the updated automated scheduling software. This initiative seeks to provide ongoing funding to meet ongoing improvements in meeting customer service expectations.

5. Provides funding for the approved reorganization of one Office Specialist I Supervisor position to a Public Service Coordinator I position and adjusts funding for related All Other costs. The Personal Services request is **\$17,224** and the All Other request is **\$821 in FY2024-25**.

The workload in the finance section of the Secretary of State including the Maine Archives, Bureau of Motor Vehicles, is constantly increasing and is dependent upon one Financial Analyst. This Assistant Financial Analyst will provide assistance to the Financial Analyst to ensure all necessary work related to budget preparation, expense monitoring and revenue projections are completed timely and at a high standard. It will also serve as the backup to the Financial Analyst when needed. This management initiated reclass was approved by the Bureau of Human Resources on 12-18-2023.

6. Provides for the funding for increased leasing costs of new vehicles for the Motor Vehicle Driver License Examiners. The All Other request is **\$99,435** and the Capital Expenditures request is **\$49,203 in FY2024-25.**

This request is to replace 9 vehicles of which 6 of them have over 150,000 miles and are leased through Central Fleet Management. The age and mileage of the current Examiner fleet of vehicles is such that significant operational and safety concerns are occurring frequently. Furthermore, the changing focus of the work being conducted by the Drivers License Examiners requires that their work vehicles be upgraded to pickup trucks to provide room for all necessary testing materials.

7. Provides funding for the planned increase in International Registration Plan membership dues. The All Other request is **\$8,591 in FY2024-25.**

BMV has received notification that the International Registration Plan membership dues will be increasing from \$11,600 to \$19,800.

8. Provides funding for the approved reorganization of one Customer Representative Associate II – Motor Vehicle position to a Motor Vehicle Enforcement Compliance Inspector position and adjusts funding for related All Other costs. The Personal Services request is **\$4,940** and the All Other request is **\$236 in FY2024-25.**

There is an increased focus within the Bureau to conduct more in-depth administrative investigations to resolve image verification matches, falsity in documentation, and other identity and cyber related criminal activity resulting in the creation of the Cyber Crime and Identity Theft Unit. This initiative seeks to reclassify the Customer Rep Assoc II-MV position to a MV Enforcement Compliance Inspector to better match the scope of the work being conducted. This management initiated reclass was approved by the Bureau of Human Resources on 9-6-2023.

9. Provides funding for the planned increase in software licenses and maintenance expenses for the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, Unified Network Interface system to act as a clearing house for driver license information. The All Other request is **\$10,114 in FY2023-24 and \$20,229 in FY2024-25.**

BMV utilizes the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA), Unified Network Interface system to act as a clearing house for driver license information. Expenses are increasing in FY24 from approximately \$47,000 to \$56,000 and in FY 25 to approximately \$65,000.

10. Provides funding for the approved reorganization of 7 Inventory & Property Associate I positions to 7 Inventory & Property Associate II positions and adjusts funding for related All Other costs. The Personal Services request is **\$34,174** and the All Other request is **\$1,630 in FY2024-25.**

As departmental needs have changed over time, the requirements of the Inventory and Property Associate I positions have changed as well. The job duties of these positions have expanded to include additional knowledge of computer inventory systems, servicing of multiple branch offices and municipalities, decision making related to proper workflows, the distribution of necessary documents and the distribution of all types of license plates required by the State. This management initiated reclass was approved by the Bureau of Human Resources on 6-13-2023.

This concludes my testimony on the items included in the Governor's proposed FY 2024-2025 Supplemental budget. I would be happy to answer your questions now or at the work session. Thank you for your consideration.