



Department of the Secretary of State Bureau of Motor Vehicles

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JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

L.D. 925 "Resolve, To Create a License Plate To Recognize the Semiquincentennial of the United States of America."

Testimony of Shenna Bellows, Secretary of State and
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Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, I am providing testimony in opposition of L.D. 925 "Resolve, To Create a License Plate to Recognize the Semiquincentennial of the United States of America".

This resolve, with an emergency preamble, creates a commemorative registration plate. The revenue generated from the sale of the plate, in excess of the cost of production and issuance, will be given to the Maine State Cultural Affairs Council.

The resolve requires our office to sell the plates from June 2025 through December 2026 and allows the display of the plates on January 1, 2026. It is simply not possible to create, manufacture, distribute, and implement a new plate in just a few months. Even though this is a commemorative plate, much work still would be required to see this through fruition. Computer programming would be required, and it requires resources to design, create and implement a new plate. We would also need to work with InforME to create a service for customers to order the plates online.

Also worth noting, BMV is currently in the process of implementing a new general issue license plate, which will replace 1.2 million sets of plates, starting May 1, 2025. Also of note, there currently is a moratorium on creating any new license plates due to this sizeable project.

The last commemorative plates, created to celebrate the State of Maine Bicentennial, sold from January 1, 2018, to December 31, 2021 was not very successful. There were only 5,181 of these plates purchased.

We respectfully ask the committee to vote ought not to pass for this resolve due to the lack of interest in the commemorative plates offered just a few years ago and the Bureau's resources needed to issue any new plate.

Finally, if the Committee does decide to move forward with this bill, the recipient of the funding should be amended to the Maine Semiquincentennial Commission, rather than the Cultural Affairs Council. The Maine Semiquincentennial Commission is tasked by law with developing and coordinating the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of our country through education and historical

events, activities and programs throughout the state. There is a Maine Semiquincentennial Fund which is administered by the Department of the Secretary of State on behalf of the commission and balances in that fund must be used for the just-referenced purposes. Funds appropriated to the Cultural Affairs Council do not have the same restrictions.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If the committee has any questions, I'd be more than happy to answer them or conduct the appropriate research. I will be available for the work session