



Department of the Secretary of State Bureau of Motor Vehicles

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Secretary of State

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JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

L.D. 1209 "Resolve, To Create a Working Group to Study the Safety and Use of Small Lightweight Vehicles on Maine's Roads and Highways, the Systems and Laws Governing Antique Vehicles and the General Improvement of Road Safety."

Testimony of Shenna Bellows, Secretary of State and
Cathie Curtis, Deputy Secretary for the Bureau of Motor Vehicles,
Department of the Secretary of State

April 1, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, I am providing testimony in support of L.D. 1209.

This resolve directs the Secretary of State to convene a working group to study the potential of allowing small lightweight vehicles such as mini trucks to be operated on roadways. As you know similar bills have been presented in past sessions, which have resulted in the review of many studies from several sources. A Maine working group will give us an opportunity to consider all the research by one working group and to compile those studies in one report for you to consider, along with our recommendations. This report will result in a comprehensive reference document going forward.

The bill includes a list of 6 potential working group members to include:

1. The Secretary of State or the secretary's designee;
2. The deputy secretary of state for the Bureau of Motor Vehicles;
3. One member from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles who is an expert in vehicle safety and emissions standards appointed by the Secretary of State;
4. One member who is a representative of a motor vehicle insurance company appointed by the Secretary of State;
5. One member who is a representative of a motor vehicle inspection business appointed by the Secretary of State; and
6. One member who is a representative of a business that imports foreign cars for sale in the State appointed by the Secretary of State.

The bill outlines several areas for the working group to study. In summary it includes:

- Considering laws, reports, studies and crash results in other states,

- The most effective way to allow for small lightweight vehicles to be used on roads and highways while protecting the safety of those driving them and other drivers,
- How to implement an inspection system that would ensure that small lightweight vehicles are safe to drive on the State's roads and highways
- Recommend whether to implement the registration, inspection and use of small lightweight vehicles and recommend any related legislation, and
- Study the safety of roads and highways in the State and recommend legislation to improve road safety generally.

The resolve requires the Secretary of State to provide a report by December 3, 2025, containing the findings and recommendations of the working group, including any suggested legislation to the Transportation Committee. It also states this committee may introduce legislation for presentation to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

In conclusion, if you vote to approve this resolve, we recommend Sec 1. Of the bill be amended as presented on the attached sheet.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If the committee has any questions, I'd be more than happy to answer them.

Department of the Secretary of State Proposed Amendment to LD 1209

“Resolve, to Create a Working Group to Study the Safety and Use of Small Lightweight Vehicles on Maine's Roads and Highways, the Systems and Laws Governing Antique Vehicles and the General Improvement of Road Safety”

Sec. 1. Small lightweight vehicle working group. Resolved: That the Secretary of State shall convene a working group, referred to in this resolve as "the working group," to study the potential to allow registration and use by motorists of small lightweight vehicles, including mini trucks, on the State's roads and highways, to review the systems and laws in place for antique vehicles and to study improving road safety generally. The working group consists of 6 members, as follows:

1. The Secretary of State , Traffic or the secretary's designee;
2. The deputy secretary of state for the Bureau of Motor Vehicles;
3. One member from the ~~Bureau of Motor Vehicles~~ Maine State Police, Traffic Safety Unit, who is an expert in vehicle safety and emissions standards appointed by the Secretary of State;
4. One member who is a representative of a motor vehicle insurance company appointed by the Secretary of State;
5. One member who is a representative of a motor vehicle inspection business appointed by the Secretary of State; and
6. One member who is a representative of a business that imports foreign cars for sale in the State appointed by the Secretary of State.