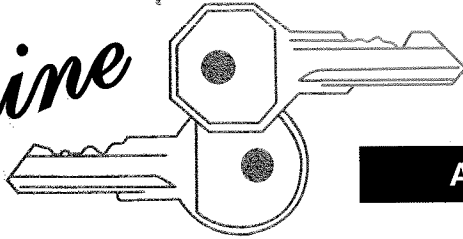


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TO: Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

RE: LD 661 – An Act to Amend Motor Vehicle Inspection Requirements

Good Afternoon, Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Tom Brown, President of the Maine Automobile Dealers Association, the state-wide organization of the franchised new car and truck dealers in Maine, all of which are members of MADA. All MADA members are also licensed safety inspection stations, with most of the technicians employed at over 200 locations in Maine being certified inspection mechanics.

MADA testifies in **Opposition to LD 661**. The proposal would eliminate the inspection requirement for vehicles driven by a Class C driver's license holder until 3 years from the last day of the month in which it was manufactured, with exceptions for collisions, natural disasters and ownership changes.

MADA supports the annual safety inspection of motor vehicles, which we believe benefits all Maine citizens. Miles driven and type of driving, combined with the condition of various roads on which we travel, are important factors to the safe operation of vehicles. The variety of weather we experience, and the chemicals we use to help treat our roads to satisfy the expectations of the driving public to have clear roads immediately after a storm ends, can accelerate the deterioration of concrete and pavement, lead to pot holes, frost heaves and uneven road surfaces, and, added to miles driven, result in significant wear and tear on motor vehicles. While vehicle owners can readily see windshield wipers, glass, and headlights, the deterioration of braking systems, fuel and brake lines, exhaust systems, tire wear and undercarriage corrosion are factors which automotive service professionals should be reviewing annually to help the safe operation of motor vehicles.

LD 661 presents several challenges. When a licensed dealer sells a motor vehicle, they are required to have inspected the vehicle no earlier than 60 days prior to the date of sale, regardless of month of manufacture. New vehicles are not always sold promptly upon their arrival from the manufacturer, so it could be many months, or a year or more, after manufacture when the vehicle is first sold. The month of manufacture is not readily known to customers. While it is generally located in the vehicle, it is not in a standard place nor in a standard format. A 3-year interval based on month of manufacture would require the Maine State Police to have multiple years of inspection stickers available for licensed inspection stations in order for the station to attach an appropriate sticker to the vehicle for expiration 3 years after month of manufacture.

The last part of LD 661 would require an inspection whenever the vehicle ownership changes. This is already a requirement when a vehicle is sold through a new or used vehicle dealership, but would add the requirement to the substantial number of private sales which occur.

With all of these factors, MADA urges the Committee to retain the annual inspection requirement. Thank you for the opportunity to express MADA's **Opposition to LD 661**.