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Testimony of Lt. Bruce Scott

NFNA LD 1194

**An Act to Phase Out Vehicle Excise Taxes and Implement a Fee
for Infrastructure Funding Based on a Vehicle's Annual Mileage**

Senator Nangle, Rep. Crafts, and distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Lt. Bruce Scott, and I am the Commanding Officer of the State Police Traffic Safety Unit. I am here today to testify on behalf of the Department of Public Safety and the Maine State Police NFNA LD 1194.

The Department of Public Safety nor the Maine State Police typically weigh in on bills that don't pertain to public or traffic safety, however this bill causes us some concerns that we would like to share.

This bill, if passed, would eliminate vehicle excise taxes and replace it with a usage-based fee (1 cent per mile for vehicles under 26,001 pounds and 1.5 cents per mile for vehicles over 26,001). The current law under Title 36 section 1483 exempts excise taxes on State owned vehicles. The bill does not exempt state vehicles or vehicles belonging to the political subdivisions of the state, meaning this would create a hefty fiscal note to State, County and Local Governments. A rough

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estimate of the financial burden to the Department of Public Safety alone would exceed \$130,000 annually. There are over 140 police agencies and 482 municipalities in Maine that would all share a financial burden resulting from the passage of this bill as written.

Additionally, this bill requires the Department of Transportation to obtain annual mileage readings on vehicle odometers by a licensed inspection technician at the time of the vehicle's annual inspection. Without an electronic inspection process this requirement would be quite problematic, if not impossible. Who would be responsible for creating a central repository for the 3,000+- inspection stations to enter the vehicle mileage into to share with the DOT?

For these reasons, we are Neither for Nor Against LD 1194.

On behalf of the Department of Public Safety and the Maine State Police, I thank you for your time and would be happy to try and answer any questions that you might have.

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