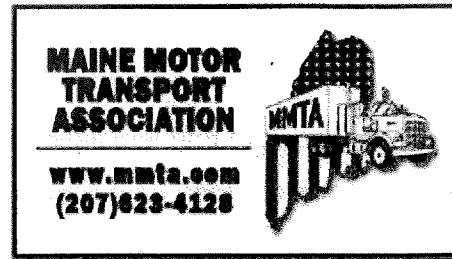


**TESTIMONY OF
Timothy Doyle
L.D. 1377, "Resolve, to Convene a Working
Group to Evaluate Potential Regulation of
the Vehicle Towing Industry and the Impact
on State Agencies and Industries"**



Good afternoon, Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and members of the Committee on Transportation. My name is Tim Doyle and I am the Vice President of the Maine Motor Transport Association and a resident of Leeds. The Association is comprised of more than 1,870-member companies, whose employees make up a large portion of the almost 34,000 people who make their living in the trucking industry in Maine.

We are testifying in favor of this resolve.

The Resolve would form a working group to evaluate potential solutions regarding regulation and enforcement of regulation of the towing industry. MMTA works closely with the towing industry, and many of the towing companies in Maine are members of MMTA. We recognize the importance of the towing industry as being vital to Maine's economy. This industry helps keep commerce flowing and our trucks moving when our trucking members require their service.

We have communicated with the towing industry over the years on matters of mutual interest and we have expressed our concerns, especially with respect to non-consensual tows. These tows are generally initiated by law enforcement after a crash or vehicle stop, where the driver or motor carrier is not available to make decisions on selecting a towing company. In these cases, a wrecker chosen by the police is called to the scene. The vehicles are removed from the highway and brought to a towing facility and impounded until the towing charges are resolved. Our industry has experienced the rising cost for such tows...some of which are difficult to justify in terms of overall cost. As the law in Maine stands now, there is very little a trucking company can do, except pay the cost of the tow. These high costs charged to trucking companies impacts all Maine citizens, as they are reflected in the cost of insurance and the overall cost of trucking.

MMTA did bring forth legislation in 2017 in the form of LD 1022, sponsored by Representative Parry. The result of that legislation is the requirement that towing companies must now itemize the tow charges before payment can be demanded...and the law also requires certain items, such as perishable products to be released from impound while the charges are disputed with a towing company. This law has helped, but it did not provide an avenue to challenge billing practices of towing companies, as the industry is not currently regulated.

To be clear, MMTA believes in free market principles and is not necessarily looking to set costs for towing at this time. We do believe, however, that a stronger look at how the towing industry invoices based upon the costs that they incur and the services that towing companies provide may be helpful to understand the high costs imposed for many tows.

This resolve also seeks to examine the impact of towing on industries in Maine. MMTA represents over 1870-member companies, and most are impacted by towing. As such, we respectfully request that the resolve be amended to add one member appointed by the secretary of state that represents the motor carrier industry in Maine.

If added to the working group, MMTA looks forward to working with the towing industry and others in carrying out the duties set forth in this resolve and reporting back to this Committee as required.

Thank you for your consideration and for allowing us to testify today. I would be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have now or at work session.