



Richard A. Bennett
Senator, District 18

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

**Joint Standing Committee on Taxation on
LD 1732, An Act to Allow a Municipality to Waive the Excise Tax on an
Antique Automobile Owned by a Person 65 Years of Age or Older
April 30, 2025**

Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation: I am Senator Rick Bennett of Oxford, and I have the honor of serving 14 communities in Western Maine in the State Senate. I am pleased to sponsor LD 1732, "An Act to Allow a Municipality to Waive the Excise Tax on an Antique Automobile Owned by a Person 65 Years of Age or Older."

I submitted this bill at the request of one of my constituents, who is here today, from South Paris. My constituent reached out in 2024 regarding the significant financial burden he faces when he registers his car annually.

His primary mode of transportation is a car that is approximately 30 years old and is worth less than \$5,000. Because Maine bases the excise tax on the original cost of the vehicle, he has had to pay \$356 every year to register his car. This constituent is in his late seventies, retired, and on a fixed income. Paying more than \$350 in excise taxes is not possible. In recent years he has had to leave his car in the garage without registering it. He worries that if this isn't changed, he will be unable to register it again.

He is not the only one in this situation. Many of our senior citizens live on fixed incomes such as pensions or Social Security. Antique vehicles are often not used for daily transportation. More often than not, these cars are used on special occasions or leisurely drives. Additionally, many seniors drive significantly less than our other constituents. Therefore, the wear and tear on public infrastructure is limited. Imagine paying \$350 to drive a car that travels only 1,000 or so miles a year.

Municipalities rely on the revenue stream from excise taxes to address their municipal needs. However, something has to give. Property taxes are so high that many seniors worry they will lose their homes. Shouldn't we give our constituents a break somewhere?

This constituent has lived in a number of different states and the excise taxes he has had to pay in Maine are an outlier. When he lived in Florida and Arizona, he paid approximately \$30 per year on the same vehicle that he pays \$356 for in Maine. Furthermore, when his daughter registered her antique automobile in Pennsylvania, she only had to pay a one-time registration fee for \$60. We must offer some relief for our constituents.

I ask you to support LD 1732. Thank you for time today. I would be happy to answer any questions.