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May 1, 2025

**Testimony of Andy Bickmore  
Maine Department of Transportation  
Before the 132<sup>nd</sup> Legislature, Joint Standing Committee on Transportation**

**In Opposition to**

LD 1756

*An Act to Establish a Statewide Transportation Project Selection Prioritization Process*

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Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Andy Bickmore, and I am the Director of the Results and Information Office at the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT). MaineDOT is opposed to LD 1756.

This bill would create a Transportation Project Selection Council tasked with managing a new statewide system for deciding which transportation projects get funded. The council would advise MaineDOT and the Maine Turnpike Authority, review project needs based on long-range plans, weigh regional goals, gather input from local governments and various interest groups, and report annually to the Governor and Legislature.

Currently, MaineDOT plans and delivers transportation work through its detailed Three-Year Work Plan, published each calendar year. The Work Plan covers all capital projects and programs, maintenance and operations activities, planning initiatives, and administrative functions over three years. The 2025 Work Plan alone includes more than 2,700 work items valued at \$4.8 billion, demonstrating the scale and complexity MaineDOT manages. It is the department's primary tool for fulfilling its mission to "support economic opportunity and quality of life by responsibly providing our customers with the safest and most reliable transportation system possible, given available resources."

MaineDOT's planning is rooted in strong asset management principles. Over months of careful work, experienced public servants analyze transportation needs, funding limitations, policy priorities, stakeholder input, project delivery capacity, and supplemental needs to ensure the best use of taxpayer dollars.

LD 1756 would unnecessarily disrupt this process by creating another layer of bureaucracy. The proposed council would slow decision-making, inject competing regional and special-interest demands into an already thorough process, and drain MaineDOT's time and resources. It would shift focus away from critical infrastructure work and force experts into administrative exercises that offer no guarantee of faster, better, or more cost-effective project delivery.

Transportation project selection should be based on objective needs like safety, infrastructure condition, and economic impact — not on political influence or regional favoritism. Injecting politics into the process risks delaying critical projects, misallocating limited resources, and undermining public trust in how transportation dollars are spent.

It is for these reasons that MaineDOT strongly urges the committee to vote ought not to pass on LD 1756. Thank you.