



# MAINE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION SINCE 1936

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## Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

### In Opposition to

#### ***LD 1526 – An Act to Change the Permissible Hours and Penalties Pertaining to the Use of Consumer Fireworks***

May 5, 2025

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Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, my name is Rebecca Graham, and I am submitting testimony in opposition to LD 1526, at the direction of MMA's Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). Our LPC is made up of individuals from across Maine with municipal officials elected by their peers across Maine's 35 Senate districts representing communities with very different access to available enforcement resources and local capacity.

The primary opposition to the bill is centered on the need to change municipal ordinances to align with the new operating time proposed by the bill which will create a fiscal note. Most noise ordinances are established with a 10:00 p.m. cut off and in tourism destinations, the weekend fireworks are often associated with weddings and back yard celebrations that use the twilight period in peak summer hours afforded by the 10:00 p.m. cut off to allow for displays and do not require the use of a commercial operator. A 9:00 p.m. cut off time will make consumer fireworks less likely to be seen, and more likely to shift the consumer market to louder noise impacts.

Additionally, many communities limit the period of use for fireworks between the hours of 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. to make sure adequate fire staff are available for any resulting public safety hazard that the permitted use may cause. In these communities, the hours are extended to 12:30 a.m. only on July 4 and January 31. This bill would upend those ordinances as well. A list of approaches municipalities have taken towards fireworks ordinances is available here:

<https://www.maine.gov/dps/fmo/inspections/fireworks/ordinances>

Increasing the fines and penalties makes sense as they are unusually low and not much of a deterrent. Current municipal ordinance violations for consumer fireworks range between \$500 and not more than \$2,500 for each offense.