



AGC MAINE

THE CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

Testimony of Matt Marks in Against LD 287

An Act to Require and Encourage Safe and

Interconnected Transportation Construction Projects

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development

January 6, 2026

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Matthew Marks; I am a Principal at Cornerstone Government Affairs and am testifying on behalf of my client, The Associated General Contractors of Maine (AGC Maine). AGC Maine is a statewide commercial construction trade association and a Chapter of AGC America, founded in 1918 with 27,000 contractors, suppliers, and service providers nationwide.

Existing Processes Already Meet — and Often Exceed — the Bill's Objectives

While we appreciate the sponsor's intent, the current planning for transportation projects includes an engineered, integrated process for community engagement. MaineDOT's three-year work plan is above and beyond the federally required Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. While a work plan is not unique, it is among the more detailed plans among several states that go beyond STIP requirements, creating opportunities for discussions beyond the engagement already underway within the planning department and municipalities.

But it's also necessary to consider the Department's ongoing activity, like the dedication to improving "Main Streets", where the Department's Partnership Initiative (PPI) for studies with consultants, funding for bicycle & pedestrian projects, and collaboration on demonstration projects like traffic calming in towns like Saco, all aiming to improve safety, economic vitality, and community livability through infrastructure and planning. These efforts often involve federal grants and local matching funds to enhance downtowns with better sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic flow, and active transportation options.

The \$500,000 Threshold is Too Low and Will Capture Routine Maintenance and Safety Work

Since AGC Maine's interests include housing, we are motivated by improvements that can expand opportunities in that market. First, the \$500,000 threshold captures small projects. To us, that indicates a time-consuming process for essential projects needed to repair our current roads, bridges, and bike paths. These are not large-scale transformational developments; they are crucial, time-sensitive public works.

Adding new mandated review steps to projects of this scale will:

- slow needed repairs
- extend design timelines
- increase administrative cost
- delay construction into future seasons
- and ultimately increase overall project expense

All of this occurs in a state with a short construction season already constrained by weather and funding cycles.

Housing Development is Already Coordinated with Transportation Needs

The Traffic Movement Permit allows the Department to work with municipalities and developers to determine the necessary transportation improvements. This ensures alignment between housing projects and transportation needs.

The balance between housing development and transportation needs is ongoing between both state agencies and municipalities. Our experience is that MaineDOT has considered the identities, needs, and potential of Maine's cities and towns in project design. MaineDOT's integration of the various modes of transportation, air, land, and water, is considered in the planning process. Where opportunities for economic development or housing have evolved, they have been proactive in discussions.

The Bill Risks Creating Confusion and Conflicting Standards

By statutorily requiring adjustments to posted speed limits and mandating specific design outcomes, the bill potentially conflicts with local traffic engineering expertise and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices standards. For ongoing construction projects, the DOT has a work zone design process that is reviewed and implemented in the field.

While we encourage the Committee to vote against this measure, if it moves forward, it's critical that it also be considered by the Transportation Committee. Thank you to the Committee for listening to my testimony and for welcoming any questions.