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**Testimony of Lt. Bruce Scott**

**NFNA LD 2053**

**An Act to Improve Safety by Allowing the Use of Variable-  
message Signs on Public Service Vehicles**

Senator Nangle, Rep. Crafts, and distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Lt. Bruce Scott, and I am the Commanding Officer of the State Police Traffic Safety Unit. I am here today to testify on behalf of the Department of Public Safety and the Maine State Police NFNA LD 2053.

This bill seeks to allow the use of variable message signs on "Public Service Vehicles." The original language of the bill would allow the use of variable message signs on public service vehicles when the vehicles are engaged in roadside repairs or recovery type services. However, the bill doesn't go far enough to restrict the misuse or abuse of these devices. The current bill doesn't restrict the type of public service vehicle that can be equipped with and display a variable message sign, the size of the sign, color of the lights used to create the message, the direction that the sign may face, nor does it regulate the type of language that may be displayed.

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Current law defines a "public service vehicle" as "a vehicle used to assist members of the public or law enforcement officers with disabled vehicles or to remove debris from a roadway, a refuse, garbage, compost, recycling or trash business vehicle used to transport refuse, garbage, compost, recycling or trash or a vehicle used to construct, maintain, inspect or repair utility infrastructure, including, but not limited to, electricity, water, sewer, cable, telephone, gas and natural gas infrastructure. "Public service vehicle" includes a wrecker." Essentially this would allow variable message signs on any vehicle that is on the roadway, if they are assisting members of the public with a disabled vehicle or removing debris from the road, etc.

It is our understanding that the sponsor of this bill, Madam Chair Crafts, has an amendment with some additional language that would address the concerns of DPS, MTA and DOT. If the amended language that is introduced into the Committee restricts the type of public service vehicle, the size of the sign, the color of the lights used to create the message, the direction the message is facing, regulates the type of language that is used and allows for rule making authority to create the standards not addressed by law, we would be able offer our support of this bill.

For these reasons, we are Neither for Nor Against LD 2053.

On behalf of the Department of Public Safety and the Maine State Police, I thank you for your time and would be happy to try and answer any questions that you might have.

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