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Testimony of Rep. Tiffany Roberts presenting

LD 2120, An Act to Enable Survivors of Abuse to Disable Connected Vehicle Services

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Good afternoon, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. I am Tiffany Roberts, and I represent House District 149, which includes parts of North and South Berwick. I am pleased to be here today to present **LD 2120, An Act to Enable Survivors of Abuse to Disable Connected Vehicle Services**.

This proposal sits at the intersection of two things I understand well: surviving domestic violence and the consequences of laws that haven't kept pace with technology. I am a survivor of domestic violence, once about 25 years ago and again 13 years ago. Those experiences were different, but they shared a common dynamic: control. Control over movement, over information, and over access to safety.

What has changed since then is technology. At one point, safety planning meant changing routines, memorizing phone numbers, and hoping you weren't followed. Years later, cell phones and GPS became part of the picture. Today, technology is embedded in nearly everything we rely on, including our vehicles.

Modern vehicles now include connected services that allow authorized users to access location data, send remote commands, and interact with a vehicle through an account or application. These features are widely used for convenience and safety. At the same time, there have been situations where these same features have been misused in abusive relationships to monitor, harass, or interfere with a survivor's ability to move freely.

LD 2120 responds to that reality by creating a clear statutory process for survivors to request that an abuser's access to connected vehicle services be terminated or disabled. The bill does not create new criminal penalties, alter ownership rights, or require survivors to give up access to

their vehicles. It focuses narrowly on digital access to connected services. Under the bill, a survivor may submit a request to the motor vehicle manufacturer or entity providing the connected vehicle service. That request includes identifying information about the vehicle and the individual whose access is at issue.

Once a request is received, the covered provider must act within a defined timeframe, and sooner in situations involving an imminent risk of harm. It allows flexibility in how providers comply, recognizing that systems vary across manufacturers and model years. That action may include disabling an account, resetting connected services, or providing instructions so the survivor can reestablish access without the abuser.

This legislation also limits data access. After an abuser's access is disabled, the provider may not provide that individual with data generated after that point. This is intended to reduce the risk of continued monitoring or tracking.

To ensure there are no financial and procedural barriers, providers may not charge fees, impose penalties, require contract extensions, or condition action on approval by anyone other than the survivor. It also structures notice to prioritize safety by ensuring survivors are informed before any notice is provided to the abuser, and only after access has been disabled.

The framework anticipates practical limitations. If a provider cannot operationally or technically carry out a request, the provider must notify the survivor and explain whether that limitation can be addressed. This approach does not require the impossible, but it does require transparency. Survivor information is treated as confidential and handled securely.

The structure of this bill reflects lessons learned from legislating in technology-heavy areas, including the automotive right-to-repair movement. Laws in this space must be specific enough to be enforceable, while flexible enough to account for technical variation and avoid unintended consequences. LD 2120 follows that approach. It is also consistent with policy developments in other states and at the federal level, while being tailored to Maine's legal framework.

I've had constructive conversations with advocates and stakeholders in the lead-up to this hearing, and those discussions have identified areas that may benefit from clarification or alignment. I look forward to continuing that work ahead of the work session.

Survivors navigating abuse are often already engaged with multiple legal and support systems. LD 2120 is intended to reduce, not add to, that complexity by providing a defined process where none currently exists.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'm happy to answer any questions now or for the work session.