



Department of the Secretary of State Bureau of Motor Vehicles

Shenna Bellows
Secretary of State

Catherine Curtis
Deputy Secretary of State

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

L.D. 1604, “An Act to Reclassify Certain Offenses under the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Laws and Motor Vehicle Laws and Increase the Efficiency of the Criminal Justice System”

Testimony Provided by Shenna Bellows Secretary of State

February 11, 2022

Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I am Shenna Bellows, the Secretary of State, and a resident of Manchester. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today in support of L.D. 1604, “An Act to Reclassify Certain Offenses under the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Laws and Motor Vehicle Laws and Increase the Efficiency of the Criminal Justice System.”

I would like to address Part B of this bill which amends Title 29-A. The Bureau takes no position with regard to Part A which addresses Fish and Wildlife laws.

I would like to note - a version of this bill was presented during the 129th Legislature before its abrupt end to the Second Regular Session. At that time, Representative Warren graciously met with representatives from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to address concerns we had with the original version. We are appreciative of the version presented here today which largely reflects that earlier work.

We support the bill’s intent to take several low-level offenses under Title 29-A and convert the penalty from a Class E crime to a traffic infraction with fines adopted by the Chief Judge of the District Court. We believe this is a reasonable compromise ensuring motor vehicle laws are upheld while alleviating the life-altering collateral consequences a criminal record carries. Implementation of these changes will pose no significant burden to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

This concludes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions. Thank you for your time.