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February 11, 2022

Hon. Susan Deschambault
Hon. Charlotte Warren
Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
State House, Room 436
Augusta, Maine 04333

Re: L.D. 1604, *An Act to Reclassify Certain Offenses Under Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Laws and Motor Vehicle Laws and Increase the Efficiency of the Criminal Justice System*

Dear Senator Deschambault and Representative Warren,


I am writing 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.

L.D. 1604 would decriminalize specific Title 29-A (motor vehicle) and Title 12 (IF&W) crimes, reducing them to civil violations; authorize the issuance of search warrants for purposes of enforcing the prohibitions; and provide that evidence obtained pursuant to an unlawful search is not admissible in civil enforcement proceedings. Although the Office of Attorney General does not typically prosecute these crimes, I support aims of the bill, because it would eliminate collateral consequences associated with criminal convictions, may reduce the State's costs to enforce these laws, and may reduce the number of cases flowing into the criminal courts so that more serious crimes can be prioritized. If the conduct can be appropriately regulated by means of civil enforcement mechanisms, it may indeed be more efficient to do so by reducing the identified crimes to civil violations.

I cannot comment on the specific language of the bill, given my understanding that the language has not been finalized. If any changes along these lines are adopted, however,

a delayed effective date would be helpful to the courts and affected agencies to allow time for implementation.

Sincerely,


Aaron M. Frey
Attorney General