

**STATE OF MAINE**

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DISTRICT I

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DISTRICT V

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**MAEGHAN MALONEY**  
DISTRICT IV

**TODD R. COLLINS**  
DISTRICT VIII



**MAINE PROSECUTORS ASSOCIATION**

Testimony of the Maine Prosecutors Association by Andrew Robinson (District Attorney for District 3)

In Support of LD1604 - 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

before the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Date of Public Hearing: February 11, 2022

Senator Susan Deschambault, Representative Charlotte Warren, and Honorable Members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

The Maine Prosecutors Association is pleased to testify in support of LD1604. The proposed legislation is designed to reclassify many Class E crimes found in Title 12 (our hunting laws) and Title 29-A (our motor vehicle laws) to civil and traffic violations. The impact of this legislation will be meaningful to the State of Maine in many ways.

The most significant change is that individuals who commit these offenses will no longer be classified as criminals. A criminal conviction can have significant consequences. The reclassification still allows for a level of accountability when the offenses are committed and charged individuals will still be afforded an opportunity for a hearing to contest any charges. However, the end result would be an adjudication on a civil violation or traffic infraction and not a criminal conviction.

Another meaningful change would occur within the criminal justice system as a whole. It is no secret that our criminal justice system was already overwhelmed prior to March of 2020. Since the pandemic, the backlog of cases has dramatically increased. This legislation would re-direct the traffic

infractions to the Judicial Branch's Violations Bureau and traffic court. The civil violations from Title 12 would remain in the District Court but would most likely be resolved on a single hearing date after arraignment. The result will be a much more efficient processing of these cases.

Finally, this legislation is an example of a successful collaboration of many government agencies and branches of government. We are grateful for the time and analysis provided by the Department of Inland Fisheries, Department of Public Safety, the Secretary of State's Office, and our legislative sponsor, Rep. Charlotte Warren. The MPA believes this legislation is an example of how we can make significant positive changes to our criminal justice system by working together.

Thank you.