



February 24, 2022

Testimony in OPPOSITION to LD 1479
“An Act To Make Certain Traffic Infractions Secondary Offenses”

Greetings Chairs Deschambault and Warren, and other members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is James Tassé, and I am here on behalf of the Bicycle Coalition of Maine to urge an “ought not to pass” vote on LD 1479, “An Act To Make Certain Traffic Infractions Secondary Offenses.”

As the leading statewide education and advocacy organization for people on bikes or walking, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine is committed to improving the safety of Maine’s roadways. We believe that LD 1479 is a bill that will impede that mission, and may make vulnerable roadway users in particular less safe.

We appreciate and share concerns about how enforcing traffic violations can be abused and support efforts to address unjust practices. However, many of the violations that LD 1479 makes secondary infractions would permit unacceptable threats to public safety for all road users, but especially to people biking or walking. In particular, we are concerned about the following examples outlined in the bill:

- Littering from a vehicle
- Making unnecessarily noise
- Operating a defective vehicle
- Driving on the wrong side of street
- Operating a vehicle with an obstructed view

All of these actions and conditions put other road users at risk-- both other drivers as well as vulnerable users on the edge of roadways. Such infractions should be discouraged and should not be reduced to secondary infractions. We share the concerns raised by the AAA, MaineHealth , the Maine Municipal Association, and the State Police and join them in opposing this bill.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 1479.

Thank you, and I’d be happy to take questions.

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "James C. Tassé".

James C. Tassé
Assistant Director
Bicycle Coalition of Maine

