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**Testimony of Senator Harold Trey Stewart
Presenting L.D. 1420, An Act to Adopt the Peer-to-Peer Car Sharing Program Model Act
Before the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee
April 20, 2021**

Senator Sanborn, Representative Tepler and esteemed members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services: I am State Senator Trey Stewart and I represent 51 communities in Senate District 2, which is comprised of Southern Aroostook County and Northern Penobscot County. I am here today to present testimony on L.D. 1420, An Act to Adopt the Peer-to-Peer Car Sharing Program Model Act.

For those who may not be aware, peer-to-peer car sharing is similar to VBRO or Airbnb – but for your vehicle. Vehicle owners post their vehicles to a platform, where guest users can then choose to use the vehicle. This activity has been occurring for over 10 years now, even in Maine, where thousands of people have signed up to use these platforms. This is an excellent opportunity for our constituents to earn extra money on a vehicle that they do not utilize. Car owners can recover the cost of car ownership, turning their car from a cost center to an income engine for their families, while guest users can find the perfect car for their exact need. This can be even more important in an area like my district, where access to conventional commercial car rentals is not always convenient.

In 2019 this committee passed L.D. 1615, which sought to regulate car sharing platforms. This bill was actually a result from the rental car industry trying to weaken peer-to-peer car sharing. The 2019 law ended up being a combination of the rental car industry bill as drafted, as well as several portions taken from similar industry regulations. Shortly thereafter, it was realized that there were aspects that the car sharing platforms were going to have difficulty complying with. As a result, this committee took up L.D. 2027 in the 129th legislature, which made some adjustments to the statute. However, even though the bill was passed out of committee well before the pandemic hit, it still never made it to the floor before the legislature was paused and ultimately died.

That is why I am sponsoring L.D. 1420 today. Instead of attempting to fix a jigsaw-type statute, I am presenting national model act, which was updated this past year with a number of changes made after negotiations with insurance providers, p2p sharing platforms and other stakeholders. It was adopted by the National Council of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL) during their 2019 conference, and the Council of State Governments included this model in their Shared State Legislation docket.

My hope is that we can place reasonable, consistent regulations on this practice so our constituents can utilize these platforms and make a little extra money, and visitors to our state

can have available additional options for their travel needs. This is free enterprise at its best, with several benefits to our citizens and visitors to our state. I hope the committee will support it.

I thank you for your consideration and while I am happy to answer any questions you may have, I think that you will find those coming after me will be better suited to do so and may address some of your questions in their testimony.