

**Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association**

**In Opposition to**

*LD 1385 – An Act to Consider Municipalities Meeting Regional Housing Goals in Awarding  
Transportation Grants*

April 25, 2025

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Sen. Curry, Rep. Gere and distinguished members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee, my name is Rebecca Graham, and I am submitting testimony in opposition to LD 1385, at the direction of MMA's Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). Our LPC is composed of municipal officials from across Maine, elected by their peers to represent communities under the legislative senate model and representing communities with vastly different enforcement staff, resources and capacities.

As drafted, the bill directs the Department of Transportation (DOT) to consider a municipality's past actions and future plans toward meeting regional housing production goals when awarding discretionary grants generally necessary to improve the transportation conditions in a community.

What metrics the department will use in its evaluation of a municipality are not clear. No direction is given on how to apply them in a measured way matched to local capacity or just what past and future actions will be part of the evaluation. Officials are not confident that a department focused on highly technical transportation needs has the expertise necessary to evaluate the actions of a municipality directed by their resident population or their future goals equitably or with a direct nexus to the transportation grant for the project application.

Without adequate technical support, public education campaigns, and understanding of projects in progress, as well as the gaps in housing needs away from southern Maine, the continued use of sticks with no carrots which require the remaining 400 municipalities to jump through unnecessary hoops to gain access to transportation grants will only undermine municipal ability to attract housing projects.

Officials respectfully ask that you consider impacts on more than just communities who must enforce the building codes before adding additional barriers to access statewide transportation funds. At a minimum, they ask for any resulting legislation to be explicit in the metrics that their past and future actions will be evaluated.