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**Testimony of Meghan Russo
Maine Department of Transportation
Before the 132nd Legislature, Joint Standing Committee on State and Local
Government**

In Opposition to LD 1934

An Act To Promote Responsible Lighting

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salsbury and members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, I am Meghan Russo, Director of Government Affairs at the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT). MaineDOT submits this legislation in opposition to LD 1934, *An Act to Promote Responsible Lighting*.

This bill requires that outdoor lighting installed or replaced after October 1, 2026, meet specific standards to minimize unnecessary light, with exemptions for certain lighting types. It requires relevant departments to create implementation rules and instructs municipalities to adopt local ordinances to support compliance, allowing for stricter local regulations.

LD 1934 requires that outdoor lighting may not exceed 125% of the light level recommended by the Illuminating Engineering Society and adopted by the American National Standards Institute “ANSI/IES lighting standard”. The ANSI/IES lighting standards are guidelines that provide best practices for specific lighting applications and serve as references for professionals to achieve optical lighting design based on industry expertise and research.

Roadway lighting installed by MaineDOT is done so for public safety. Lighting installed by MaineDOT is full cut-off lighting and designed to proper lighting levels. MaineDOT moved to 4,000 Kelvin lighting fixtures many years ago to provide better light levels for vehicular and pedestrian safety. *Kelvin* is the unit used to describe the color temperature of a light source. The lower the Kelvin rating the more subtle the light is. For safety reasons MaineDOT looks for contrast on our Maine roadways and lighting with higher Kelvins help us achieve optimal contrast. This bill would limit our lighting installations to 3,000 Kelvin. Guidance from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has also confirmed there is evidence that light with a high blue content can increase alertness and enhance cognitive performance of motorists.



The above photo shows areas of I-295 in Portland with different levels of Kelvin lighting. The photos on the left are high-pressure sodium lighting of 2100 Kelvin. The picture on the right represents the full cut off 4000 Kelvin lighting. As shown above, the 4000 Kelvin lighting provides more contrast to vehicles and pedestrians.

MaineDOT's lighting installations are governed by 23 MRSA § 708. This section of statute sets forth the requirements for lighting installations on MaineDOT assets. This LD would cause conflict with the existing statute setting additional restrictions which could adversely impact public safety.

It is for these reasons we recommend the committee vote ought not to pass on LD 1934. Thank you.