

CATALYTIC CONVERTER ANTI-THEFT MODEL LEGISLATION FOR MAINE

An Act to Restrict Sales of Catalytic Converters Removed from Motor Vehicles

- (1) Only the following entities can sell a catalytic converter removed from a motor vehicle:
 - (a) A licensed business.
 - (b) An individual or entity who holds title to the vehicle from which a catalytic converter was removed.

- (2) Any entity selling a catalytic converter removed from a motor vehicle must:
 - (a) Mark or affix on the catalytic converter the vehicle identification number of the vehicle from which the catalytic converter was removed, or other suitable identification of the converter, such as catalytic converter stock number or seller's identity.
 - (i) A "scrap metal processor" as defined in 30-A § 3771 can only purchase a detached catalytic converter already removed from a vehicle so long as the removed catalytic converter already has the vehicle identification number marked or affixed on the catalytic converter.

- (3) Nothing in this section shall prohibit the resale of a properly marked catalytic converter for vehicle repair purposes that is consistent with state and federal emissions requirements.

Bill Bell
Maine Auto Recyclers Association

In opposition to LD 796

The Maine Auto Recyclers Association is a standard trade association of small business firms which dismantle cars, sometimes trucks, re-sell the parts, and ultimately dispose of the vehicles through the auto crushing process. Auto recycling is by volume the largest recycling business in the country and performs a very valuable function. Our Maine Association is very proud to have worked with Maine DEP to establish the first Mercury Switch collection program in the country, to assure that these contaminants are fully removed from the waste stream. Auto recyclers are licensed by their municipality and regulated by both Maine DEP and Maine's Bureau of Motor Vehicles. There are almost 300 auto recyclers on the BMV list. Most of these are very small, family operations, some of them basically selling a small number of used cars and occasionally dismantling a vehicle for parts. At the same time, there are firms dismantling dozens of vehicles a day. About 50 of these firms are members of our Association, including most of the larger firms.

Others testifying today can describe how badly LD 796, if passed as written, would affect their livelihood. Auto recycling is generally not a very profitable business. Selling the catalytic converters has become one of the few profitable aspects of what our members do. And of course this same high value of catalytic converters has attracted widespread thievery, of which we are, like many other Mainers, including the sponsor of LD 796, the unfortunate victims.

We are not the problem here, and we want to be part of the solution. Together with this testimony I am attaching what our Maine organization, working with our national Automotive Recyclers Association, proposes as workable approach. This approach places a burden on our members, by requiring that a traceback number or name be attached to, or inscribed on, every catalytic converter which is sold. But we believe that traceback ability is the key to law enforcement, provided law enforcement follows up.

Bill Bell, Executive Director