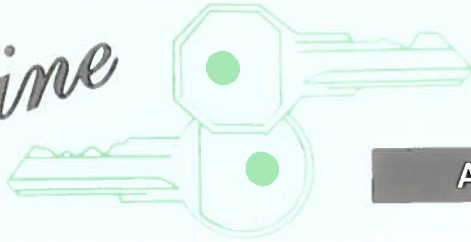


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Testimony in Regard to LD 796

Good afternoon. Senator Diamond, Representative Martin, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Transportation Committee. My name is Tom Brown and I am President of the Maine Automobile Dealers Association, the statewide organization of 116 franchised new car and truck dealerships with nearly 6000 employees in all parts of Maine. Our dealerships sell and service new as well as used vehicles, with sales volume of nearly 125,000 units annually.

MADA presents this information in regard to the issue of Catalytic Converters. The theft of converters has been and is a major problem, and MADA supports efforts to restrict the inappropriate transfer of these valuable components of a motor vehicle. Current Maine law at Title 30-A, Sections 3772 and 3775, has been developed over the years to try and curtail some of the financial gain by converter thieves. While helpful, it obviously has not totally accomplished its goal.

With respect to the specifics of LD 796, MADA would suggest that the limitation on who can sell a converter removed from a motor vehicle be slightly expanded to allow for a representative of a licensed inspection station to also handle this transaction on behalf of the licensed inspection station. It is not always feasible to take a licensed safety inspection technician away from repair work to deliver converters to a scrap metal processing facility -- their time is needed to work on customer vehicle maintenance and repair with a delivery deadline. Even in those instances in which a scrap metal processor picks items up from a dealership, the dealership Parts or Service Manager or other designated individual is not necessarily a licensed safety inspection technician. MADA would suggest allowing an appropriate individual employed by the licensed safety inspection facility to handle that transfer.

The theft and unauthorized sale of catalytic converters is a significant cost to vehicle owners. Should the Committee decide to continue seeking solutions to this problem, MADA would be pleased to participate.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our perspective.

Tom Brown