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April 6, 2021

## **LD 821– An Act to Improve the Investigation and Prosecution of Cases That Involve Vulnerable Road Users**

Greetings Senator Diamond, Representative Martin, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation. My name is Lori Parham and I am the State Director for AARP Maine. AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. On behalf of our more than 200,000 members statewide, thank you for the opportunity to share testimony with you today.

I am sharing testimony today in support of LD 821.

AARP Maine supports the efforts of our communities to be great places for people of all ages. We believe that communities should provide safe, walkable streets; age-friendly transportation options; access to needed services; and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community life.

Older road users are overrepresented in both vehicle and pedestrian crash fatalities in large part because of their increased fragility and frailty.<sup>1</sup> In 2017, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that 20% of pedestrian fatalities occurred in people over 65.<sup>2</sup> The age group with the largest number of pedestrian traffic fatalities were those between ages 50-to-54 and 55-to-59.<sup>3</sup>

For too many years, transportation policies have mostly served people using fast-moving vehicles rather than public transit, bicycles or their own two feet. LD 821 will create a more consistent response to crashes, provide accurate reporting on accidents involving a vulnerable user, and encourage drivers to drive more carefully.

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<sup>1</sup> AARP. AARP Policy Book. 2019. policybook.aarp.org

<sup>2</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Traffic Safety Facts 2017 Data: Pedestrians. U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington, DC; 2019. Available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812681> . Accessed 3 April 2021.

<sup>3</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Traffic Safety Facts 2017 Data: Pedestrians. U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington, DC; 2019. Available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812681> . Accessed 3 April 2021.

We respectfully ask members of this committee to vote to pass LD 821.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [lparham@arp.org](mailto:lparham@arp.org) or (207) 400-1026.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lori Parham  
AARP Maine

