

April 8, 2021

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Good afternoon Sen. Diamond, Rep, Martin and members of the Transportation Committee. I'm pleased to write in support of LD 1230, An Act to Enhance Traffic Safety with Regard to the Operation of Bicycles on Public Ways. I'm sorry I am not available to speak before you in person.

I'm Jason Shaw, the General Manager and Treasurer for Jack Shaw and Sons, Inc., of Woolwich. We're an excavating contractor and have been in business for over 75 years. It's a family business, and safety is our number one priority.

Similar to other similar businesses, we use our vehicles like dump trucks and trailer, which are full legal width, all around the Midcoast area, doing site work for residential and commercial customers – driveways, septic systems, excavating for foundations, for instance, but also working on the roads in our Town and plowing snow in the winter.

We are safe drivers and believe in sharing the road with bicyclists. We know that in some towns, bicycles have the right to the entire lane but on rural roads, many don't have paved shoulders, they can be hilly, and have a lot of curves. We expect to see bicyclists on many of these roads, especially in the summer.

Our concerns are when we come across bicyclists riding 2 abreast, or even 3 sometimes. On smaller town roads, this isn't a problem. It's the main roads where it feels dangerous when we come across bicyclists riding more than single file and staying two abreast. Many of these roads have speed limits of 45 to 50 mph but they don't always offer the best sight distances. We don't expect bicyclists to move into the shoulder because frankly, most of the shoulders on our roads are unpaved and downright dangerous. But we do feel like safety would be served better if they moved into a single file for the amount of time when there is motor vehicle traffic sharing the road.

As you know, commercial vehicles are not as responsive as cars. That not only includes our vehicles, but concrete trucks, wood trucks, oil trucks, as well as RVs, who are often less familiar with our roads.

The bigger problem, frankly, is the state of our road shoulders. I advocate for paved shoulders every chance I get with the DOT people. I am also a fan of bicycle lanes. I feel like this bill is about safety and I believe this is a common sense way to enhance safety. Thank you for your time.