



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY  
BUREAU OF PARKS AND LANDS  
22 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

AMANDA E. BEAL  
COMMISSIONER

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
TRANSPORTATION

IN OPPOSITION TO LD 1141

*An Act to Improve Access and System Preservation by Providing Shoulders and Bicycle Lanes on State Roadways Leading to State Parks and Other Significant Destinations*

April 4, 2023

Senator Chipman, Representative Williams, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Andy Cutko, and I am the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands. I am speaking on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) in opposition to LD 1141, *Act to Improve Access and System Preservation by Providing Shoulders and Bicycle Lanes on State Roadways Leading to State Parks and Other Significant Destinations*.

The intent of encouraging bike lanes is admirable and is consistent with the Department's aims related to public health and climate-friendly recreation. As the Committee considers this bill, however, I encourage you to take into account a few significant factors.

First, and most importantly, Section 3 of the bill proposes to move \$1 million in general funding from State Parks – General Operations to the Maine Department of Transportation for this initiative. This amounts to nearly the entirety of the State Parks' General Fund appropriation (\$1.027 million) to cover all expenses beyond Park staffing. These General Funds are fundamental to supporting ongoing operations for State Parks, particularly in light of our record visitation levels (3.3 million/year) over the past few years. As drafted, we can not support this bill because of the crippling impact on our State Parks and Historic Sites.

Second, as specified in Section 1.C, the need for bike lanes should be assessed relative to the usage of the State Parks *but also Historic Sites*. Some Historic Sites, such as Fort Popham and Fort McClary, receive as much use as many State Parks; Historic Sites should therefore be included in any assessment. If suitable funding were identified that did not adversely affect our Parks and Historic Sites, the Bureau would be glad to serve as a partner in such an assessment and prioritization process.

I would gladly answer any questions now or at the work session.

HARLOW BUILDING  
18 ELKINS LANE  
AUGUSTA, MAINE



PHONE: (207) 287-3200

FAX: (207) 287-2400