

Derek Pelletier
Portland
LD 1292

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation

My name is Derek Pelletier, I grew up in Lewiston and currently live with my family in Portland. I have family in Lewiston and am frequently traveling between the two cities on the Turnpike.

I support LD 1292 because:

1. It makes fiscal sense! LD1292 is estimated to save approximately \$200 million which is needed for to maintain and repair our existing roads and bridges.
2. It stops pouring good money down the drain to fund expansion of the Turnpike. After a century of building highways, we have learned that continuing to build highways does not fix congestion. More road capacity to ever more rural areas encourages sprawl, which requires more driving, which eventually fills the roads to capacity. See Transportation for America report, the Congestion Con.
3. Maine did this in 1980s when MTA was flush with cash and the state was broke. It's the only reason the MTA continued to exist, as it used revenue from tolls to fill the short-term funding gap.
4. Other states allocate toll money, much of which comes from out of states, to fund needs of the whole state for transportation infrastructure and service
5. This bill does not impede operations or maintenance in any way - the Maine Turnpike will remain in the same condition.
6. Gives legislature more authority over funding priorities for Maine's transportation revenues.
7. MTA will argue that the tolls should only be used to maintain the Turnpike out of fairness to its payers. If this were true, why has the MTA been charging toll payers about \$40 million more per year than it needs to cover its costs? Plus, anyone who uses the Maine Turnpike also uses the roads that feed into it, by definition.