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Legislative Council  
c/o Legislative Information Office  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

November 8, 2021

Re: LR 2146 "An Act To Exempt Specialty License Plates Already in the Process of Being Created from the Moratorium on the Approval of Any New Motor Vehicle Registration Plates"

Dear President Jackson, Speaker Fecteau, and Members of the Legislative Council,

We are writing in support of Sen. Cathy Breen's bill LR 2146 "An Act To Exempt Specialty License Plates Already in the Process of Being Created from the Moratorium on the Approval of Any New Motor Vehicle Registration Plates".

Last year, Maine Outdoor Brands, a non-profit alliance of Maine's outdoor product, service, experiential and retail brands, put forward a specialty plate proposal to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) following the Maine Specialty License Plate Request Procedures (29A M.R.S.A., Section 468). Our plate design and request were approved by Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap on June 9, 2020 and for more than a year, we have been working diligently to collect signatures with the \$25.00 deposit specified in the requirements. On October 20, 2021, when we received a letter from the Secretary of State asking us to abandon our campaign (attached), we had achieved 80% of our goal, despite the challenging signature collection conditions created by the pandemic.

Maine Outdoor Brands is focused on economic development through outdoor recreation – a \$3 billion industry in our state, per the US Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis, representing 4.2% of Maine's GDP. We believe strengthening our state's outdoor industry can help sustainably grow our economy and attract a younger workforce to the state. Proceeds from the 'Adventure' plate would be used for programs and initiatives to foster outdoor entrepreneurship, support careers in the outdoor industry through education and mentorship, and increase outdoor participation for Maine youth.

For the past 16 months, the collection of signatures has required a significant investment of time and resources – both of which our non-profit, like most non-profits, have little to spare. LR 2146 would allow plate efforts like ours, already approved for signatures and with significant progress towards the goals established by the BMV, a path forward for further review and consideration. We have already begun fielding calls and emails from some of the 1,500 Maine residents who signed up for the plate. While some are understanding of the situation created by the "pause," others are calling it a "scam" and "deception." This questioning of our credibility and intention is extremely troubling for us.

We understand the intent of L.D. 1618 that first initiated the pause. For organizations that had not finalized their approvals from the BMV or reached a critical volume of pre-order sales, it makes sense. In our case, however, where we've reached 80% of the prescribed goal, to change the rules at this point creates unintended consequences that we feel are unfair and creates significant hardship for us going forward.

On behalf of our more than 130 member brands and 1,500 Maine residents who have pre-ordered the Adventure plate, we ask that you allow LR 2146 to be heard this coming session. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenny Kordick".

Jenny Kordick  
Executive Director, Maine Outdoor Brands

130th Legislature  
**Senate of Maine**  
Senate District 25

*Senator Cathy Breen*  
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*Appropriations & Financial Affairs  
Committee, Chair*

November 1, 2021

**Re: Appeal of the Legislative Council's decision on LR 2146, An Act To Exempt Specialty License Plates Already in the Process of Being Created from the Moratorium on the Approval of Any New Motor Vehicle Registration Plates.**

Honorable Ryan Fecteau  
Speaker of the House  
2 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Speaker Fecteau,

Earlier this year, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed L.D. 1618, Resolve, To Place a Temporary Moratorium on the Approval of Any New Motor Vehicle Registration Plates and Initiate a Registration Plate Working Group. As you may know, there are parties who had embarked on meeting the standards for a new specialty plate when this moratorium was enacted. My bill, L.R. 2146, will allow these organizations, who have already invested time and money in developing a specialty license plate, to continue the process.

This bill is of particular interest to two organizations who have already invested considerable resources to secure new specialty plates. First, Barbara Bush Children's Hospital was in the process of launching its plate into the commercial, motorcycle and trailer markets when the Bureau of Motor Vehicles ordered it to stop. This will deprive the hospital of funds that would be used to provide life-saving services to the state's most vulnerable children.

Second, Maine Outdoor Brands (MOB), an "alliance of Maine's outdoor product, service and retail companies united to drive Maine's \$3 billion outdoor recreation economy," has collected thousands of signatures — and dollars — from Mainers who want to support its mission. MOB board members are concerned that they will lose all of the money invested in the plate and have to return money to all who have reserved one. Further, it's quite possible that cancelling these orders will damage the organization's credibility through no fault of its own.

I have no issue with L.D. 1618. I understand that a pause in this program is warranted. However, it's not fair to the Barbara Bush Children's Hospital or to Maine Outdoor Brands to change the rules in the middle of the game. My bill will simply "grandfather in" groups whose specialty plates have been approved by the state and are already far along in the process. I urge you to reverse your decision and let this bill be heard in this coming session. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Cathy Breen