

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 124th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2009

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Legislative Document

No. 595

H.P. 433

House of Representatives, February 17, 2009

### An Act To Prevent High-speed Chases

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Reference to the Committee on Transportation suggested and ordered printed.

*Millicent M. MacFarland*  
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND  
Clerk

Presented by Representative KNAPP of Gorham.  
Cosponsored by Senator BARTLETT of Cumberland and  
Representatives: BEAUDOIN of Biddeford, BOLDUC of Auburn, BURNS of Whiting,  
HASKELL of Portland, NASS of Acton, SANBORN of Gorham, Senator: GOOLEY of  
Franklin.

1 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

2 Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §2117 is enacted to read:

3 §2117. Unlawful use

4 It is an offense under this section to allow unlawful use of a motor vehicle. A law  
5 enforcement officer who observes a violation may determine it unsafe to engage in a  
6 chase of the offending vehicle and alternatively may record the time and the location of  
7 the violation, the registration plate number and a description of the vehicle involved. The  
8 officer shall initiate an investigation of the reported violation and, if possible, contact the  
9 registered owner of the motor vehicle involved and request that the registered owner  
10 supply information identifying the operator. If the operator of the vehicle is determined  
11 by the investigation, the officer shall summons the operator for the observed violation;  
12 otherwise the officer may summons the registered owner for the observed violation. In  
13 addition, the investigating officer may summons the registered owner for allowing the  
14 unlawful use of the vehicle under this section. It is not a defense to the offense of  
15 allowing unlawful use that the registered owner was not operating the vehicle at the time  
16 of the violation. The penalty for the violation of allowing unlawful use under this section  
17 is \$500.

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**SUMMARY**

19 This bill allows a law enforcement officer, rather than engaging in a high-speed  
20 chase, to issue a summons to an offender for an observed violation. If the operator is not  
21 determined, the owner of the registered vehicle may be summonsed for the observed  
22 violation. The registered owner of the vehicle may also be charged with the offense of  
23 allowing unlawful use, whether the owner was in the vehicle or not, for a fine of \$500.