

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE  
Department of Public Safety  
Maine State Police  
Traffic Safety Unit  
State House Station 20  
Augusta, Maine  
04333-0020

PAUL R. LEPAGE  
GOVERNOR

JOHN MORRIS  
COMMISSIONER

COL. PATRICK J. FLEMING  
CHIEF

LT. COL. ROBERT A. WILLIAMS  
DEPUTY CHIEF

Senator Collins, Representative Cebra and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation.

My name is Lt. Brian Scott and I am here on behalf of the Department of Public Safety and the Maine State Police to report back on LD 1642, "An Act Relating to Road Noise."

The Department of Public Safety, Bureau of State Police convened a working group to study the issues relating to highway traffic noise, including, but not limited to, unwarranted noise created when an exhaust system is not properly maintained or is altered.

The Road Noise Working Group was well represented by a broad spectrum of persons including members from local and county law enforcement, the Maine Motor Transport Association, the Maine Department of Transportation, the Maine Turnpike Authority, The Maine Department of Environmental Protection, the Forest Lake Association, Representative Meredith Strang-Burgess (the Bill's sponsor), Representative Kathy Chase, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, the State Police's Commercial Vehicle Enforcement and Traffic Safety Units along with several special interest groups such as Maine Custom Auto Association, National Street Rod Association and United Bikers of Maine.

Vehicle exhaust noise has been an issue that has come before this Committee on many occasions. The issues, implications, and proposed solutions have varied widely. This Committee passed LD 1642 during the last session. This initiative clarified the statutory language in the hopes of making enforcement more practical. It is probably too soon to fully understand the impact of this change. As a result of this Committee's deliberations and attention drawn to this topic, some law enforcement agencies conducted enforcement campaigns, and educational efforts were initiated. I am pleased to report that we have already received some encouraging feedback. The group feels that these efforts and recent legislative actions have already resulted in reducing road noise.

The group has also considered other recent actions taken by this Committee to enact statute changes that will require motorcycles to display an inspection sticker effective January 1st, 2012. This may further help to reduce road noise caused by loud motorcycles.

Since the law change is fairly recent and another law change is scheduled for next January, the Road Noise Working Group feels that we should continue to monitor the effectiveness of those changes before additional measures are taken. With your consent this group has agreed to reconvene if needed over the next two years and if necessary report back to the committee during the 126th Regular session with an update regarding issues surrounding road noise and any further recommendations at that time.

On behalf of the Department of Public Safety and the Maine State Police, I thank you for your time and would be happy to answer any questions that you might have.

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**Public Law**  
124th Legislature  
Second Regular Session

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**Chapter 639**  
**H.P. 1170 - L.D. 1642**

**An Act Relating to Road Noise**

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

**Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §1912, sub-§1**, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

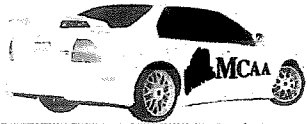
**1. Muffler required.** A person may not operate a motor vehicle unless that vehicle is equipped with an adequate muffler properly maintained to prevent excessive or unusual noise. For purposes of this subsection, “excessive or unusual noise” includes motor noise emitted by a motor vehicle that is noticeably louder than similar vehicles in the environment.

**Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §1912, sub-§3**, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

**3. Amplification prohibited.** A person may not operate a motor vehicle with an exhaust system that has been modified ~~to amplify~~ when the result of that modification is the amplification or increase of noise emitted by the motor above that emitted by the muffler originally installed on the vehicle.

**Sec. 3. Working group; excessive highway traffic noise.** The Department of Public Safety, Bureau of State Police shall convene a working group to study issues relating to highway traffic noise, including, but not limited to, unwarranted noise created when an exhaust system is not properly installed or maintained or is altered. The working group must include representatives from municipal and county law enforcement, a commercial motor carrier association, the Department of Transportation, the Maine Turnpike Authority and a neighborhood or neighborhood association affected by highway noise. The working group shall submit a report, including findings and recommendations, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over transportation matters no later than January 15, 2011.

Effective July 12, 2010



# Maine Custom Auto Association

*Performance & Specialty Equipment Auto Businesses*

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Dear Senator Collins, Representative Cebra and Members of the Transportation Committee:

The Maine Custom Auto Association would like to inform the Transportation Committee that Lt. Scott's recommendation was the consensus of the working group relative to LD 1642, An Act Relating to Road Noise. Not only do we support this course of action, we also have a commitment from the Specialty Equipment Marketing Association (SEMA) to address this issue on their national web site as part of an educational component. Knowing that many Maine auto hobbyist utilize the SEMA Action Network (SAN) we felt it would be a productive action.

Sincerely,

Ray Simond

Legislative Director

Maine Custom Auto Association