



Maine Sheriffs' Association

"One Team, One Mission"

Sheriff Wayne Gallant, President

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Sheriff William King, Secretary - Sheriff Todd Brackett, Treasurer – Sheriff Joel Merry, Immediate Past President –
Sheriff Donna Dennison, Executive Board Member-at-Large - Mary-Anne LaMarre, Executive Director

March 17, 2017

L.D. 351 "An Act To Allow Municipalities to Prohibit Weapons at Municipal Public Proceedings and Voting Places"

Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Good afternoon Senator Rosen, Representative Warren and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Wayne Gallant. I am the Sheriff of Oxford County and the President of the Maine Sheriffs' Association.

The MSA understands that this legislation allows municipalities to prohibit the carrying of dangerous weapons in municipal public proceedings and voting places.

The legislation exempts "on duty" law enforcement officers. The sheriffs would support this bill if the words "on-duty" were removed. Many law enforcement officers and corrections officers carry a firearm while off duty.

With the recent rash of violence against police, many corrections officers who drive to work in their uniforms have expressed concern being in a corrections uniform that is similar to a police uniform, unarmed.

Most agencies have policies requiring officers to be armed while "on call" or while operating a county owned vehicle. And many agencies encourage their officers to carry firearms while off duty as well. This legislation, as written, will dampen an unofficial force multiplier if an officer is prohibited from having access to a weapon because he has business at a municipality.

The MSA will unanimously support LD 351 if the words "on duty" were removed.

Thank you for permitting me to share the views of the Maine Sheriffs. I welcome any questions from the committee.

Respectfully,

Oxford County Sheriff Wayne Gallant
President of the Maine Sheriffs' Association