



Maine Sheriffs' Association

"One Team, One Mission"

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April 5, 2024

L.D. 2283 – An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the Safety of the Public

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Eric Samson. I am the Sheriff of Androscoggin County and here today on behalf of the Maine Sheriffs Association. L.D. 2283 - An Act to Enact the Crisis Intervention Order Act to Protect the Safety of the Public has the best of intentions and while Maine sheriffs unquestionably want to protect the safety of the public, L.D. 2283 falls short.

Every lawmaker serving in the 131st legislature, regardless of party, feels the weight of the tragic events that unfolded in my county, on October 25, 2023. The horrific incidents of that evening have forever changed my staff, my colleagues, my neighbors, and my fellow sheriffs. Collectively, we have mourned the tremendous loss of life, and it is incumbent upon all of us to ensure the safety of Maine's citizens from future atrocities. Unfortunately, this LD has significant flaws that resulted in our position of opposition.

We have grave concerns about the omission of mental health professionals being included as part of this proposal. When firearms are removed from the possession of a person that is suspected to be a danger, why does this bill fail to provide support to that individual? It is disconcerting that we further agitate a person identified as being a threat without any safety net. Additional concerns were raised about due process. Does this bill ensure that citizens will be treated fairly? Could this be used nefariously by parties as a form of retaliation? Why are petitions limited to household members or law enforcement officers? We also question why the bill is limited to firearms only. Should this be expanded to include other weapons? As you can see, there are a plethora of shortfalls in L.D. 2283, that cannot be ignored.

Maine's sixteen sheriffs have nearly six hundred years of collective law enforcement experience ensuring the safety of Maine citizens. We value the time and commitment the sponsor graciously invested in this proposal; however, we urge committee members to oppose L.D. 2283, and work with Maine sheriffs to develop appropriate measures to protect Maine citizens.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Androscoggin Sheriff Eric Samson
Maine Sheriffs Association