



# Waterville Police Department

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Waterville, Maine 04901-6699

**William L Bonney**  
*Interim Chief of Police*

Testimony of Interim Chief of Police William Bonney,  
Waterville Police Department

LD1828

“An Act Regarding Enhanced 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Points.”

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology  
May 9, 2023

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology, I am William Bonney, Interim Chief of Police of the Waterville Police Department. I appear before you today to support LD 1828, An Act Regarding Enhanced 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Points.

In 2003 the Maine Legislature enacted a law directing the Emergency Services Communications Bureau to reduce the number of Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) from 48 to between 16 and 24. On October 10, 2007, the City of Waterville Communications Center, which provided PSAP services to Waterville, Oakland, and Winslow, lost our status as a PSAP and all 9-1-1 calls were directed to Central Maine Regional Communications Center in Augusta. At that time the system became fragmented. In other words, if you called 9-1-1 from Waterville on October 9, 2007, a Waterville dispatcher would have answered your call and immediately dispatched assistance for your emergency. On October 10, 2007, your call was routed to another center, in Augusta, where your information would be collected and then your call was forwarded by that center to a Waterville dispatcher, who would then dispatch your call. There is no reasonable argument that this improved services for the citizens of Waterville.

By December of 2007 The City of Waterville reached an agreement with the Somerset County Regional Communications Center to provide PSAP services to the city. This was a successful and longstanding relationship, albeit one which didn't solve the issue of fragmentation. This relationship lasted until January of 2023 when it was announced that Somerset County would not be renewing the PSAP contracts for any Kennebec County community, except Benton.

Due to regional consolidation efforts which took place in 2008 the Waterville Regional Communications Center provides dispatch services for nine communities in Northern Kennebec County (See attachment A). These communities account for a little over 14,000 9-1-1 calls per year. There is currently no PSAP available to cover these calls and meet the quality assurance standards in place for PSAPs in Maine – 90% of 9-1-1 calls answered within 10 seconds. The communities in Southern Kennebec County, which lost PSAP services due to this decision by Somerset County, are being served, effective July 1, 2023, by the Androscoggin County Regional Communications Center.

Because the Waterville Regional Communications Center maintained certification in Emergency Medical Dispatch and Emergency Fire Dispatch, staples of PSAP services, our center is in a unique position to step up and provide this critical service to our customer communities with little additional training. Furthermore, the

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fragmentation, created by the 2010 consolidation, would be reduced and the 7,200 plus 9-1-1 calls made from Waterville would once again be answered and dispatched from the same center, improving service to our citizens, and providing high quality service to our customer communities, which are also without a viable option for PSAP services when the contracts expire with Somerset County.

Under LD 1828, the Emergency Services Communications Bureau would be allowed to establish another PSAP on the determination that it was necessary to ensure public safety services and access to E-9-1-1 services. I cannot think of a time when it is more necessary than it is at this moment, and I urge you to vote ought to pass on this bill.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William L. Bonney", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William L Bonney  
Interim Chief of Police  
Waterville Police Department