

**Testimony of Peter Rogers, Director Maine Emergency Management Agency
Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND
FINANCIAL AFFAIRS WITH THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL
JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

"An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023"

January 24, 2023

Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs, also, Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. I am Peter Rogers, Director of the Maine Emergency Management Agency. I am here today to testify in support of the supplemental budget bill, LD 206.

The mission of Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is to lead and coordinate preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts across all-hazards to protect life, property, the environment, and the economy of Maine. The Agency's role before disasters is to promote statewide initiatives that build preparedness at all levels. During and after disasters, the Agency enables local and county-level response and recovery by coordinating State resources to assist. As the scope of a disaster increases beyond the capability of local government, the Agency's role is to lead and coordinate response across State agencies; and, if it exceeds the capability of the State of Maine, to coordinate with other states, Canadian Provinces, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

I will refer to our budget initiatives as listed in the Public Hearing Testimony agenda. Starting on page A-11 and continuing page A-12, there are eleven initiatives to provide funding for approved position reorganizations in the Maine Emergency Management – Administrative (0214) program.

Of note, there are two initiatives, the fourth and fifth on page A-11, that also reallocate the costs of the positions from 50% General Fund and 50% Federal Expenditures Fund to 100% General Fund. The two positions involved are incredibly unique in State Government and serve as the sole regulators of dam safety in the State of Maine. The positions require very specialized experience and qualifications which

exceed those of the current position. Reallocating to the General Fund ensures we maintain the capability to conduct inspections and ensure regulatory compliance of critical infrastructure. Additionally, this initiative frees up critical Federal funding to be used for training, exercise, equipment, and other key expenses.

The remaining nine initiatives outlined on pages A-11 and A-12 enable the Agency to better meet its role in effective grant administration. MEMA has seen a marked increase in grant funding since 2017– with seven new grants assigned to the Agency since that time. To further illustrate this point, in 2019, the Agency received a total of \$12.6 million in Federal grant awards; in 2021, the Agency received \$73.5 million. This trend has only continued in 2022. With two new grants and ongoing COVID-19 reimbursements that have already topped 150 million dollars, these figures will continue to rise. Much of this funding is passed through to municipalities, non-profit organizations, healthcare facilities, and other, local entities. These position reorganizations will allow the Agency to pass these funds through more quickly and effectively to local stakeholders.

This concludes my testimony. Thank you and I would be happy to address any questions you may have.