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**Testimony of Scott A. Young, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management**

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND
FINANCIAL AFFAIRS WITH THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON VETERANS
AND LEGAL AFFAIRS**

**LD 206, "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 Hickman, Representative Supica and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. I am Scott Young, Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management. I am here today to testify in support of the supplemental budget bill, LD 206.

The Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management (DVEM) coordinates and administers the discharge of Maine State Government's responsibility for all military, veterans and emergency management activities through the authorization, planning, provision of resources, administration, operation and audit of each. In addition to their Federal mission, our National Guard are immediately available to respond to the Governor and citizens of Maine in times of crisis. The Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services provides numerous support services to Maine's 108,000 veterans and manages Maine's four Veterans' Memorial Cemeteries across the State. Although not included in my testimony today, the Maine Emergency Management Agency is charged with all disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and Homeland Security operations within the State of Maine.

I will address our budget initiatives in the order listed in the Public Hearing Testimony agenda. I will cover DVEM initiatives beginning on page A-13 of the proposed General Fund Part-A supplemental budget.

Military Training and Operations 0108 (Pg. A-13)

The three initiatives on page A-13 provide for the approved reclassification of 1 position and approved reorganization of 2 positions in the Military Bureau. Initiative 3 on this page proposes the reallocation from 27% General Fund and 73% Federal Expenditures Fund to 100% Federal Expenditures Fund. If the proposed reallocation is passed, all 3 of these positions will be 100% federal funded. The first, second, and third initiative will increase the Federal Expenditures Fund by \$1,682, \$883, and \$6,006 respectively. While the third initiative will reduce the General Fund by \$4,898.

These positions support activities under the Master Cooperative Agreement between the State of Maine the National Guard Bureau. The reclassification (initiative # 1) is intended to strengthen the Business Office in the Maine Army National Guard while the reorganizations (initiatives # 2&3) will provide much needed support to the Real Property accounting and inventory functions within the Military Bureau.

Veterans Services 0110 (Pg. A-14)

The first two Initiatives provide for the approved reorganizations of 2 positions in this program. The first initiative reorganizes a Management Analyst II to a Public Service Coordinator I position whose duties have evolved because of changing State and Federal programs and benefits. The General Fund will increase \$2,863. The second initiative reorganizes a Grounds & Equipment Maintenance Manager to a Deputy Superintendent-Cemetery position due primarily to an increasing complex and multi-faceted cemetery operation which increases the administrative requirements of this position. The General Fund will increase \$2,531.

The third initiative adjusts funding to revenues as recommended in the December 1, 2022 forecast of the Revenue Forecasting Committee. The Other Special Revenue Funds will decrease \$6,619.

Finally, the fourth initiative provides funding for the burial of State National Guard and Reserve members in the Maine Veterans' Memorial Cemetery system. In 2022, the Legislature passed Public Law 2021, Chapter 593 to enact Maine Revised Statutes, Title 37-B, section 504, subsection 4 which allow the interment of State National Guard and Reserve members who would not otherwise qualify under the Department of Veterans Affairs standards to be buried in the State Veteran Cemeteries. Since passing of this law our department has learned the National Cemetery Association and Department of Veterans Affairs will not provide a headstone or grave marker for these service members, nor will they provide the State with their standard plot allowance. The plot allowance is used for the maintenance and perpetual care of the Maine Veterans' Cemetery System. Interring National Guard and Reserve service members in our cemetery system will utilize a considerable amount of land and resources, both of which are limited. Our department can't absorb these costs. Without this funding, families of our interred service members will have to pay for these services. The General Fund will increase \$22,500.

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