

As a City Councilor of Lewiston, a member of the Legislative Policy Committee of the Maine Municipal Association and a twice-retired law enforcement officer and executive, I support LD 673.

Lewiston has, as have many, many communities continually struggled to maintain its police force. As a CALEA accredited agency (one of only 5 in Maine) we can not place untrained, uncertified officers on the street until they attend and pass the MCJA. The current system severely limits the number of slots for training each year and seems proprietary on the part of the Department of Public Safety.

By allowing a certified program with a non-residential component to be established we could increase the number of training slots without affecting the quality of training.

Maine's local community colleges could be used to present an approved curriculum utilizing many of the instructors currently teaching at the MCJA.

Think for a moment of having a force of 84 sworn members having vacancy of 14 officers. Think what this does to proactive community policing. How forced overtime contributes to burnout and then think that to replace a position with a trained officer can take a year. We need to increase the availability of training slots and this proposal will do just that.

I believe there is total support from the Lewiston Legislative Delegation, MMA and Mayor Sheline and the entire City Council.

We trust you will assist us in solving a problem that too many Maine communities are experiencing.

Lee Clement
Lewiston City Council
LD 673

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