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First responders are exposed to significantly more stressors and potentially traumatizing experiences due to occupational exposure than the average person. Despite some recent gains, there remains a strong stigma against seeking mental health treatment among first responders (please see <https://www.policechiefmagazine.org/you-have-to-see-the-psych/?ref=0d0ccda59570431f8aaa288f6c2507a8>). The proposed legislation will assist Maine first responders with regard to their being able to access culturally competent mental health care. Ensuring that our first responders are mentally healthy is not only good for our communities, but it will also reduce the likelihood of misconduct. Said another way, for example, police officers who are psychologically unwell are more likely to engage in misconduct. Given the great power and responsibility our society instills in law enforcement, it stands to reason that we should do everything in our power to ensure that our police officers remain mentally healthy across their career. As a police and public safety psychologist with nearly 20 years of experience in this field, I can confidently state that first responder mental health is one of the most important issues in need of attention in our society. Since 2016, more police officers have died by suicide than all line of duty deaths combined (please see First Help at <https://1sthelpp.org/>). We owe a debt of gratitude to our first responders, and we should do everything in our power to reduce the frequency, and seek to eliminate, officer suicide. Most of the conversations in our country now center around police use of force and interactions between police and citizens. If our goal is positive police-citizen interactions, then we need to ensure that our police officers are mentally healthy from the time they get hired until long into their retirement. Thank you for your time and attention. I welcome the opportunity to answer any specific questions you might have. Please support our first responders.