



## Maine Chiefs of Police Association

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### Statement in opposition to

### **L.D. 179, An Act to Amend the Maine Bail Code to Eliminate the Class E Crime of Violation of Condition of Release**

### **Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety**

**February 3, 2025**

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and honorable members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. My name is Jason Moen. I am the Chief of the Auburn Police Department and serve as President of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association. I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association in opposition to LD 179.

The Mission of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association is to secure a closer official and personal relationship among Maine Police Officials; to secure a unity of action in law enforcement matters; to enhance the standards of police personnel, police training and police professionalism generally; to devise ways and means for equality of law enforcement throughout the state of Maine; to advance the prevention and detection of crime; to prescribe to the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics; and to promote the profession of law enforcement as an integral and dedicated force in today's society sworn to the protection of life and property.

This proposed legislation repeals the provision of law that makes it a Class E crime for a criminal defendant who has been granted preconviction or post-conviction bail to violate any condition of release.

When an individual commits a criminal act, law enforcement officers can issue a summons or make an arrest. If it is the latter, it may be due to the type of crime that occurred, the threat that individual may further harm the public or themselves, or the possibility of that person committing additional crimes. Setting conditions of release for the accused is done so to prevent those situations from happening. Those conditions are clear, as are the consequences of violating the conditions.

There are victims associated with most crimes for which a person is arrested and bailed with conditions. Those conditions, generally, are aimed at providing immediate relief to the victims of a case or to provide enhanced safety to the community at large. The passage of this bill would result in less safety for Maine's crime victims and the general public.

As law enforcement officers, our goal is for those who have committed criminal acts to modify their behavior and make better choices in the future. If a person has been arrested and jailed for operating under the influence, a condition of release may be not to consume alcohol or use drugs. This is a way to incentivize someone to modify the behavior that led to the initial criminal act. Law enforcement officers lose a key tool in deterring repeated bad behavior by eliminating consequences for violating these conditions.

On behalf of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association, we respectfully ask that the Committee vote Ought Not to Pass on LD 179.