



**STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
MAINE STATE POLICE**

**Colonel William Ross  
CHIEF**

**LTC Brian Scott  
DEPUTY CHIEF**

**TESTIMONY OF MATTHEW RUEL  
DIRECTOR, STATE BUREAU OF IDENTIFICATION**

**Neither for nor Against LD 259**

**Members of the Committee:**

My name is Matthew Ruel, and I am the Director of the State Bureau of Identification within the Department of Public Safety. I provide this testimony on behalf of the Administration Neither for nor against LD 259.

SBI serves as the repository of all criminal history information in the state and currently provides criminal history for law enforcement and public purposes. We are responsible for providing this information to law enforcement across the country, from the officer roadside all the way through the criminal justice process up to judges making sentencing decisions. This information is also used as part of hiring, certification, and licensing requirements on a state and national level. Many organizations rely on this information to vet potential employees or volunteers that have direct contact with vulnerable populations. SBI completes more than 500,000 public searches annually, in addition to every law enforcement transaction. Having an accurate, complete, timely criminal history is our mission and a key component in public safety.

I provide this testimony Neither for Nor Against while pointing out that we have been willing partners in this process over the last couple of years. Our main concerns with the continuation of this commission really are tied to value. Is there value in the continuation of this work as a stand-alone commission? We have had an opportunity to discuss topics that were of major legislative concern (sealing of records and how to deal with records of crimes that are no longer considered crimes). After a couple of years of meetings I think that any further work could be done during work sessions directly with committee members. I also feel that the number of people on the commission has made it challenging to effectively complete work.

Regardless of what decisions are made regarding this LD the State Bureau of Identification will always be available to assist in whatever way needed and promptly provide information needed to make decisions on criminal history.

If there is any further information needed, please let me know and I will do my best to provide it to the committee for any work session.