



## **Maine Chiefs of Police Association**

P.O. Box 264 – Oakland, Maine 04963-0264

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**Chief Jason Moen - President**

Chief Michael D. Tracy (Ret.), Executive Director, Tel: (207) 838-6583  
email: [mcopa@maine.rr.com](mailto:mcopa@maine.rr.com) Web site: [www.mainechiefs.com](http://www.mainechiefs.com)

### **Statement in support of**

**L.D. 374, An Act to Provide Comparable Compensation and Benefits for Deputy and Assistant District Attorneys, Assistant Attorneys General and Public Defenders**

**Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary**

**February 24, 2025**

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Jason Moen. I am the Chief of the Auburn Police Department, and the President of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association. I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association in support of LD 374.

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.

Simply put, this proposal provides comparable compensation and benefits for deputy and assistant district attorneys to Maine's assistant attorneys general and public defenders.

Maine is experiencing a workforce shortage across the state and in all career sectors. Law enforcement agencies and our prosecutors' offices are not immune to this phenomenon. Recruiting talented attorneys to fill these public positions has proven difficult when private practices and public defenders can pay a much higher salary from day one.

A key component of keeping our communities safe is ensuring that criminal cases proceed through the courts in a timely manner. With a reduced number of prosecutors comes increased caseloads, an environment ripe for a backlog of cases, and a greater chance of employee burnout. All of these factors lead to a decrease in public safety. Pay parity between public prosecutors and defenders will help tremendously in ensuring the public that our judicial system is balanced, fair, and efficient.

On behalf of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association, we respectfully ask members to support the passage of LD 374.