



# CUMBERLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

290 TUTTLE ROAD  
CUMBERLAND, MAINE 04021

CHARLES J. RUMSEY, IV  
CHIEF OF POLICE

EMERGENCY  
911

BUSINESS  
(207) 829-6391

FAX  
(207) 829-2211

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee:

My name is Charles Rumsey. I am a 30-year practitioner of policing. For over 8 years, I have served as the Chief of Police in Cumberland. I am a past President of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association, and Chair of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy's Board of Trustees. I am writing to offer my testimony in opposition to LD 723, An Act Requiring the Maine Criminal Justice Academy to Develop a Nonresidential Basic Law Enforcement Training Program.

The MCJA Board of Trustees, as established by Title 25, Section 2802 is made up of 19 members who are either gubernatorial appointments or ex-officio members, including law enforcement and corrections professionals, a municipal official, an educator, a prosecutor, citizen representatives, and more. Our purpose is to protect the public's health and welfare. The purpose of the Academy is "to provide a central training facility for criminal justice personnel," and to "promote the highest levels of professional law enforcement and facilitate coordination and cooperation between various criminal justice agencies." It was with these purposes in mind that the current Basic Law Enforcement Training Program (BLETP) model was established. Mandating a nonresidential BLETP would fracture this training model.

This bill is a solution in search of a problem. As of the beginning of the current BLETP, there were no officers waiting to attend the Academy. This means that there is not a capacity issue that needs to be addressed by the legislature. Arguments that a nonresidential BLETP would attract nontraditional candidates to the profession who are unwilling or unable to attend a residential BLETP are speculative at best. These candidates, should they materialize and be trained at a nonresidential BLETP, would then be required to perform shiftwork, work holidays, work overtime, and attend court and training. It is naïve to assume that these non-traditional Academy cadets would then flourish in our profession.

A strategic plan and job-task analysis are underway at MCJA under the watchful eye of the Board of Trustees. The outcome of this work will determine what future BLETP training looks like. It may well encompass a hybrid of remote learning, non-residential and residential training. A legislative mandate to force a particular type of training is premature.

In addition to major fiscal impacts and unbearable administrative burden on the MCJA's small staff, a parallel nonresidential BLETP would require a 100% increase in the pool of volunteer subject matter expert instructors. Even now, the Academy occasionally struggles to find instructors. Doubling the number of instructors needed is unrealistic.

Should circumstances change, the Board of Trustees is prepared to consider all options, including non-residential training. However, based on the foregoing, at our January meeting the Board of Trustees voted to adopt the following statement:

***“Based on the current demand for training, the MCJA Board of Trustees opposes a mandate to offer a non-residential academy. However, the Board continues to closely monitor demand and will continue to consider alternatives to meet future need, in line with our five-year strategic plan.”***

I appreciate the committee's time in reviewing this information and respectfully ask that you vote this bill Ought Not To Pass. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.