



Maine Chiefs of Police Association

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Statement in opposition to

L.D. 726, An Act to Protect Municipalities' Investment in Law Enforcement Officers

Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

March 10, 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 the 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 726.

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.

As stated in the bill's summary, current Maine law requires that when a governmental entity hires a full-time law enforcement officer within 5 years of the officer's graduation from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy or the Indian police academy at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, and that officer's training was paid by the the governmental entity, the hiring governmental entity must reimburse the original governmental entity a designated portion of the officer's training costs. The owed required reimbursement runs anywhere from 20 percent to the full amount of the paid training costs, depending on the length of time since the officer graduated.

This bill doubles the amount of reimbursement. Remarkably, if an officer leaves to serve at a different agency and does so within three years of completing their training at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy or Indian police academy, the hiring entity must pay more than the actual cost of the training, an amount ranging from 120 percent to 200 percent of the total cost.

As members of the municipal law enforcement community, we have always worked collaboratively with other law enforcement departments to ensure that our communities are safe and to help detect and prevent criminal activities. We are also supportive of any career moves our officers may need to make to another agency if it is the right move for them personally. There may be opportunities for career advancement or a better schedule. Unforeseen circumstances, such as a family move or health issues with a family member, may require them to move to a different region of the state. These situations happen, and we work with our officers and the hiring unit as best we can to ensure a smooth transition for all involved.

We are not opposed to a hiring governmental entity being liable for reimbursing a portion of training costs for a recent graduate. Law enforcement agencies invest in their employees' training to ensure they are well-prepared to serve their community effectively. If that law enforcement officer were to leave for another unit, it is only right that these agencies recoup some of their costs. However, reimbursement for training costs should not be turned into a profit-making venture.

The current system, which has been in place for years, works. We do not see a reason to change it.

For these reasons, the Maine Chiefs of Police Association opposes the passage of LD 726. We respectfully ask members of the Committee to vote Ought Not to Pass.