



Maine County Commissioners Association

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March 10, 2025

Sen. Anne Beebe-Center, Chair
Rep. Tavis Hasenfus, Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice &
Public Safety
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: *Comments of MCCA on LLD 298, An Act to Employ Mental Health Personnel Within the Maine State Police*

Dear Members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee:

On behalf of the Maine County Commissioners Association, we appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony ***neither for nor against*** LD 298.

About MCCA. Briefly, the Maine County Commissioners Association was established in 1890 to assist Maine's county government in providing vital services to Maine citizens in a responsive, efficient, and credible manner. The Association is based in Augusta, represents all 16 of Maine's counties, and is governed by a board with representation from each participating county.

What would LD 298 do? LD 298 would appropriate funds in FY 26 and FY 27 for three Behavioral Health Coordinator positions and one Supervisor position within the Maine State Police. Behavioral Health Coordinators would be responsible for making decisions about health, safety, and welfare of individuals who have interacted with law enforcement and who are in need of services. One Behavioral Health Coordinator would be assigned to the state police Southern Field Troop, one to the Central Field Troop, and one to Troop F.

Discussion. Our Association consistently supports legislative efforts to improve public safety statewide, and we see great value in involving more behavioral health specialists in law enforcement operations. However, this bill raises questions around the appropriate level of public safety staffing statewide. For instance, this bill does not provide behavioral health support for the Northern Field Troop. Moreover, some counties do not have rural patrol coverage from the Maine State Police, and so presumably would not benefit from these additional behavioral health coordinators. Given the difficult budget environment, additional study and analysis may be prudent to determine where resources would be best spent – including making sure resources are appropriately balanced throughout the state.

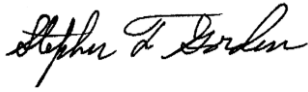
Conclusion. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony ***neither for not against*** LD 298. If you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to let us know.

MCCA Letter re LD 298

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Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Gorden
Co-Chair, Legislative Policy Committee, MCCA



Jean-Marie Caterina
Co-Chair, Legislative Policy Committee, MCCA

cc: Commissioner Andre Cushing, President, MCCA