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March 10, 2025

Testimony of Representative Laurie Osher in opposition to
**LD 303, An Act to Repeal the Law Prohibiting Unauthorized
Paramilitary Training**
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I am Laurie Osher, and I represent House District 25, which is most of Orono. Thank you for the opportunity to come before you today to speak in opposition to **LD 303, An Act to Repeal the Law Prohibiting Unauthorized Paramilitary Training**.

The Maine Constitution explicitly states, “No standing army shall be kept up in time of peace without the consent of the Legislature, and the military shall, in all cases, and at all times, be in strict subordination to the civil power”.

This bill seeks to repeal the statute created by LD 2130, An Act to Prohibit Unauthorized Paramilitary Training, that passed last year.

Prior to passing LD 2130, Act to Prohibit Unauthorized Paramilitary Training, our laws did not provide the power to Maine’s law enforcement professionals to prevent people from engaging in paramilitary training here in Maine for the purpose of civil unrest.

I sponsored LD 2130 after a white supremacist leader from Ohio purchased property in Springfield, Maine, less than 60 miles from my district, and began a social media campaign to raise funds to build a paramilitary training facility there. That man sold the property after the significant public outcry and concern in response to his plans. His goal of training wannabe militia members “to prepare for a coming race war” highlighted the need for the Maine Legislature to clarify in statute that is allowed in Maine.

Our constitution explicitly prohibits armies that do not have consent of the Legislature, and our legislature has not called for a militia to be created.

The bill that I sponsored last session, LD 2130, passed both the House and Senate and was signed into law by Governor Janet Mills. It ensured such activity can be prevented and stopped.

The facility that was being planned in Springfield wasn’t the only one.

*Testimony of Rep. Laurie Osher, PhD, opposing LD 303
March 10, 2025*

While in Aroostook County earlier this year on the Legislator's Tour organized by the Maine Development Foundation, I met Raymond Price, the President of the University of Maine at Presque Isle. He thanked me for sponsoring LD 2130. He reported that another white supremacist leader from away had purchased land near the UMPI campus and was planning to build a paramilitary training camp there. President Price and members of the UMPI community were frightened when they heard about it and then relieved that the project was scrapped after LD 2130 passed. Repealing the law would put their community and the Springfield community on edge again.

Repealing the law to prohibit unauthorized paramilitary training would remove the power now granted to the criminal justice and public safety professionals in Maine to protect Maine citizens from these types of activities.

I ask you to please vote Ought Not To Pass on LD 303. Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have for me.