



Maine Sheriffs' Association

"One Team, One Mission"

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March 17, 2025

**TESTIMONY OF
SHERIFF DALE P. LANCASTER
MAINE SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION**

**LD 534 – An Act To Clarify the Rights of Crime Victims and Witnesses Regarding
Professional Investigator Communications**

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Dale P. Lancaster. I am the sheriff of Somerset County and the Immediate Past President of the Maine Sheriffs Association. I am providing this testimony on their behalf.

The MSA's legislative policy committee has taken the unanimous position to SUPPORT for LD 534 – An Act To Clarify the Rights of Crime Victims and Witnesses Regarding Professional Investigator Communications.

Before a professional investigator seeks information from a witness, it's imperative that the witness understands how the information in that interview will be used. The ethical approach is to be fully transparent and identify how the interview report will be shared, and who the client is before the interview begins. Witnesses may not understand the process and inadvertently provide an interview to a professional investigator, not understanding that they have the right to refuse to speak with a PI.

There was some discussion about expanding the private investigator's disclosure to offer a little more detail. We would like to ensure the victim understands the investigator is providing services on behalf of the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services by adding this language to Sec. 1. 17-A MRSA §2110 2. B.

Thank you for your consideration and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.