



# Maine County Commissioners Association

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March 18, 2025

Sen. Michael Tipping, Chair  
Rep. Amy Roeder, Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Labor  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: ***Comments of MCCA regarding LD 848, An Act Regarding the Retired County and Municipal Law Enforcement Officers and Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program***

Chair Tipping, Chair Roeder, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor:

On behalf of the Maine County Commissioners Association, we appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to this Committee **neither for nor against** LD 848. While we take no position regarding many aspects of the bill, we have some concern about the potential for new costs on local government. We also want to make sure the Committee is aware that the current Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program covers only firefighters employed by municipalities, not firefighters employed by county government – which is something that should change.

**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 does LD 848 do?** LD 848 provides a period from October 1, 2025, to November 30, 2025, in which current county or municipal law enforcement officers and municipal firefighters who previously opted not to enroll in the Retired County and Municipal Law Enforcement Officers and Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program may enroll in the plan. The bill also requires the Bureau of Human Resources' Office of Employee Health and Wellness to provide electronic briefings regarding the retirement program to newly hired county or municipal law enforcement officers and municipal firefighters

**Discussion.** Our Association takes no position with respect to the open enrollment period proposed for the Retired County and Municipal Law Enforcement Officers and Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program. We write only to provide two comments.

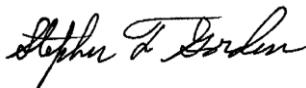
First, regarding the bill's requirement that the Office of Employee Health and Wellness provide electronic briefings on the program to newly hired law enforcement officers and municipal firefighters, we note that the bill does not indicate how the Office of Employee Health and Wellness will be apprised of newly hired county and municipal employees. To the extent the bill would require county and municipal administrators to inform the Office of Employee Health and Wellness of new hires throughout the year,

our Association would not support the additional clerical obligation for county governments that are already under-resourced. In fact, such an imposition of costs could constitute a local government mandate necessitating a mandate preamble. We also note that county governments are already required to share information about the program with newly hired county law enforcement officers.

Second, although the focus of the bill as it relates to firefighters is the “Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program,” we note that there are also county governments in Maine that employ firefighting personnel. Despite the existence of county firefighters, under the current program, only *municipal* firefighters are eligible to join the retirement program. Our Association encourages the Committee to consider amending the law at some point to allow county firefighter personnel to participate in the retirement program.

**Conclusion.** We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony regarding this bill. If you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Gorden  
Co-Chair, Legislative Policy Committee, MCCA  
MCCA



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

cc: Commissioner Andre Cushing, President, MCCA  
James I. Cohen, Verrill Dana, LLP, Legislative counsel for MCCA