

MAINE SERVICE CENTERS COALITION

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Testimony of the Maine Service Centers Coalition LD 848, An Act Regarding the Retired County and Municipal Law Enforcement Officers and Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor, the Maine Service Centers Coalition is submitting testimony in support of LD 848, An Act Regarding the Retired County and Municipal Law Enforcement Officers and Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program.

The Maine Service Centers Coalition, comprised of 26 towns and cities across the state, articulates the importance of healthy and thriving service center communities, advocates for public policy that supports and contributes to the economic and social viability of our communities, and collaborates with municipal officials, legislators, state agencies and nonprofits to pursue quality of life for all who live and work in our state.

LD 848 would offer a two month special open enrollment window for our law enforcement officers and firefighters not currently enrolled in the Maine Public Employee Retirement System's Retired County and Municipal Law Enforcement Officers and Municipal Firefighters Health Insurance Program. The bill would also require the Maine PERS to provide electronic briefings about the health insurance program every two months to our newly hired law enforcement officers and firefighters.

We have heard reports of police officers and firefighters who did not receive any information at all about the Maine PERS Health Insurance Program. There have also been instances when they were provided with inaccurate information that led them to the decision not to enroll in the insurance program. We feel strongly that these situations should be corrected, especially given their willingness to serve our communities.

Our police officers and firefighters deserve accurate program information as well as the opportunity to reconsider their decisions during a special open enrollment period. New hires would be far better served, and their orientation more efficient and effective, having Maine PERS present them with their health insurance options.

On behalf of these brave public servants, the Maine Service Centers Coalition respectfully urges you to vote ought to pass on LD 848.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.