



Maine Chiefs of Police Association
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Statement in support of

L.D. 117, An Act to Provide Funding for Sexual Assault Services

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

March 20, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Jason Moen. I am the Chief of the Auburn Police Department, and President of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association. I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association in support of LD 117.

The mission of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association is to secure a closer official and personal relationship among Maine Police Officials; to secure a unity of action in law enforcement matters; to enhance the standards of police personnel, police training and police professionalism generally; to devise ways and means for equality of law enforcement throughout the state of Maine; to advance the prevention and detection of crime; to prescribe to the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics; and to promote the profession of law enforcement as an integral and dedicated force in today's society sworn to the protection of life and property.

This proposal would allocate approximately \$3 million over the next two years to fund sexual assault services. The funding would be used to increase the salaries of advocates for sexual assault survivors. The Maine Chiefs of Police Association supported similar legislation introduced during the 131st legislative session. We are pleased to continue to voice our support for these essential frontline workers.

Sexual assault advocates provide critical support to survivors of sexual assault. These advocates are extremely important partners on sexual assault calls. For example, they are able to inform and reassure the survivor through the investigation and prosecution. This often results in higher levels of cooperation so that the offender is held responsible for their actions, which can then reduce levels of secondary trauma for the survivor.

We need to retain and recruit advocates that are not only qualified to do the work but also possess certain attributes such as the ability to listen to painful stories and to empower survivors to move through their trauma. These are unique qualities not found in many people. When you find the right people to support sexual assault survivors, you want to make sure they are appropriately compensated for the critical work they do. Pay raises will help retain these fantastic workers.

Law enforcement officers deeply appreciate and value the work done by sexual assault advocates. Supporting funding to increase their salaries is one small way to say thank you for all that they do to help sexual assault survivors.

For these reasons, the Maine Chiefs of Police Association supports the passage this legislation. We ask the committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 117.