



Maine Chiefs of Police Association

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Statement in support of

L.D. 981, An Act to Provide Electronic Notification to Victims of Crimes

Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

March 26, 2025

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and honorable members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety 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 981.

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.

Crime victims, especially those who have experienced significant trauma, have the right to feel safe and secure in their daily lives. They should be able to enter their homes, shop in their favorite stores, or go to a loved one's event without the fear of further harm. Knowing that their perpetrator is secure in a detention facility allows them to go on with their daily activities with greater peace of mind.

Victims also have the right to know if the perpetrator is no longer in custody, especially in those cases involving domestic violence, stalking, and criminal threatening. Victims may need to take certain measures to ensure that they and their family members are safe. But there is a significant difference between sending a notification and knowing that a victim has been informed of a change in incarceration status. This is a problem we are currently facing in Maine when the notification method is only allowed through the mail. Notifications may take days to be

delivered to a victim's address, and there are no assurances that the victim has received or read a notification. This is why we must change the way this critical information is shared.

LD 981 modernizes current Maine law to include electronic notifications when a defendant is released on preconviction bail or released or escaped from custody. With an automated crime victims notification system implemented, as required and funded by this proposal, a victim will be provided with timely notices of an offender's change in incarceration status or custody and notices regarding criminal justice proceedings considered to be in the best interest of crime victims and public safety.

Electronic notifications can be delivered instantly to victims in various forms. They can be sent through email, text, or automated phone calls. Since most people carry a cell phone with them, these notifications can be accessed immediately. Automated notification systems can also detect when the recipient has read or heard the message. This added benefit confirms for law enforcement that the victim has been informed of the latest information about the defendant.

Maine is one of the last remaining states without an electronic notification system. We should never be an outlier when it comes to public safety. Providing electronic notification to victims will vastly improve sharing real-time communication with victims who most need information about the offender.

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 981.