



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
MAINE STATE POLICE**

Colonel William Ross
CHIEF

LTC Brian Scott
DEPUTY CHIEF

**TESTIMONY OF MATTHEW RUEL
DIRECTOR, STATE BUREAU OF IDENTIFICATION**

Neither for nor Against LD 1187

Members of the Committee:

My name is Matthew Ruel, and I am the Director of the State Bureau of Identification within the Department of Public Safety. I provide this testimony on behalf of the Administration Neither for nor against LD 1187.

SBI serves as the repository of all criminal history information in the state and currently provides criminal history for law enforcement and public purposes. We are responsible for providing this information to law enforcement across the country, from the officer roadside all the way through the criminal justice process up to judges making sentencing decisions. This information is also used as part of hiring, certification, and licensing requirements on a state and national level. Many organizations rely on this information to vet potential employees or volunteers that have direct contact with vulnerable populations. SBI completes more than 500,000 public searches annually, in addition to every law enforcement transaction. Having an accurate, complete, timely criminal history is our mission and a key component in public safety.

I provide this testimony Neither for Nor Against. If the intent of this LD is to provide the number of people getting mental health referrals tied to the ERPO process this information may already be available since the process requires an assessment by a clinician. In addition, a report is provided yearly by the Commissioner of Public Safety addressing ERPO's and may contain the information being requested. This wouldn't require any additional burden on data collection by the parties tied to this process and would have no fiscal impact. If on the other hand the intent is to capture referrals for mental health care, or ongoing treatment for an individual, law enforcement would not have any access to that care information. In addition, law enforcement would already be removed from the process by the time mental health care is set up and would have no knowledge of that care being set up. There also would be no mechanism in place to share mental health treatment information back to law enforcement. If we could overcome the obstacles in getting this information this would still create an issue for SBI as we are a criminal history repository and not set up to include mental health information in our database of criminal history records. While we agree that collecting this information could be useful to policy makers, I just don't think law enforcement is the right entity to get access to that information, and SBI is not the right place to keep it.

If there is any further information needed or questions I can answer, please let me know and I will do my best to provide it to the committee for any work session.