



## **Maine Chiefs of Police Association**

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### **Statement in support of**

### **L.D. 1215, An Act Regarding Residency Restrictions for Sex Offenders**

### **Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety**

**April 7, 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 1215.

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.

Maine law allows for a municipality to adopt an ordinance regarding residency restrictions for persons convicted of Class A, B, or C sex offenses committed against persons under the age of 14 years. Any such ordinance may only restrict residence, and an ordinance may set up buffer zones up to 750 feet from areas frequented by children, such as schools, town or state-owned parks, public athletic fields, and recreational facilities. However, these municipal restrictions do not apply to any registered sex offenders living in the restricted areas before the ordinance is adopted.

As law enforcement officials, we support efforts to keep our communities and the public safe. That is especially true of our youngest citizens. We support municipalities having the ability to adopt ordinances that strengthen registered sex offender residence restrictions, but very few municipalities have approved such restrictions. In the absence of a statewide law, some children are at greater risk of being victimized.

LD 1215 proposes to amend the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act of 1999 and Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act of 2013 by requiring that offenders comply with municipal residency restriction ordinances. It also directs the Sex Offender Management and Risk Assessment Advisory Commission to conduct a study and develop recommendations regarding a statewide residency restriction for sex offenders and submit a report and recommendations for legislation to this committee by December 2025.

We understand that the bill's sponsor will meet with the Sex Offender Management and Risk Assessment Advisory Commission this week to discuss this legislation in greater detail. We look forward to hearing the outcome of that meeting. We hope the Commission is open to conducting a study that will hopefully provide insightful data on whether a statewide residency restriction is feasible or other options that may strengthen our current laws.

For these reasons, the Maine Chiefs of Police Association supports the passage of LD 1215. We respectfully ask members of the Committee to vote Ought to Pass.