



## **Maine Chiefs of Police Association**

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### **Statement in support of**

### **L.D. 1427, An Act Extending the Statute of Limitations on Criminal Actions Involving Aggravated Sex Trafficking**

### **Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary**

**April 14, 2025**

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and honorable members of the Judiciary 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 1427.

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 legislation proposes extending the statute of limitations for prosecution of a Class A or Class B crime involving aggravated sex trafficking from 6 years to 20 years following commission of the crime. If enacted, it would apply to those crimes committed on or after the effective date of the law or for which the prosecution has not yet been barred by the statute of limitations in force immediately prior to the law's effective date.

Law enforcement officers are taxed with investigating a broad range of offenses, from minor infractions to the most serious crimes. Among the most disturbing cases we encounter are those involving aggravated sex trafficking. These crimes often target vulnerable individuals, usually teenagers, who tend to be the most susceptible to manipulation, threats, and psychological exploitation.

Sex trafficking cases are not easy to investigate due to their complexity and working with survivors who have experienced unimaginable trauma. They are often afraid, ashamed, and emotionally fragile to the point that they are reluctant to come forward in a timely manner. It may take years before these survivors have the courage and feel safe enough to report what happened to them. Unfortunately, it may be too late for some of these survivors to file charges and seek justice.

For law enforcement to build a strong case, an investigation requires a significant amount of time to be thorough and accurate. This process can be complex as it may involve multiple jurisdictions, coordination with other agencies, and finding witnesses who may have relocated. Sex traffickers also tend to be serial criminals. Giving law enforcement more time to investigate these cases may lead to discovering patterns of behavior by the perpetrator which may connect related cases.

We are also seeing an uptick in case developments many years after the commission of the crime due to improvements in forensic technology or digital evidence. Extending the statute of limitations, as proposed in this bill, provides law enforcement needed flexibility to pursue these developments and hopefully bring traffickers to justice.

For these reasons, the Maine Chiefs of Police Association asks for your support and to vote ought to pass on LD 1427.