



## **Maine Chiefs of Police Association**

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### **Statement in support of**

**L.D. 1710, An Act Regarding the Authority to Transport Prisoners Confined in Jail and the Use of Physical Force with Respect to Prisoners and Persons Who Have Been Arrested**

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

**April 28, 2025**

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and honorable members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. My name is Jason Moen. I am 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 1710.

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 makes several important updates to Maine law. It allows corrections officers and transport officers to carry out duties related to transporting and custody of prisoners at court—duties currently assigned to sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, or other law enforcement officers. It clarifies the legal standards for the use of physical force in the context of corrections. It extends current protections against deadly force and the misuse of laser pointers to include corrections officers, transport officers, and their supervisors. It also extends the exception to the prohibition on using electronic weapons to transport officers, recognizing their operational needs.

We support this legislation for several key reasons.

First, it brings consistency and clarity to Maine law regarding who is authorized to transport and remain with prisoners in court. This will improve coordination among sheriff's departments, local law enforcement, and the corrections system in delivering these essential public safety services.

Second, all public safety officers operate in high-risk, high-pressure environments regardless of their specific title. Like police officers, corrections and transport officers face very real threats in the line of duty. They deserve the same legal safeguards currently afforded to other law enforcement personnel.

Third, officers must know when and how they are legally permitted to use physical force. This bill helps establish a clear framework for when non-deadly force is justified—such as in the event of an escape, in self-defense, or to protect others. It also outlines the limited and dangerous situations in which deadly force may be justified. This clarity will support officer decision-making, safety, and accountability.

Finally, this proposal addresses the serious risks posed by laser pointers. These devices can cause permanent eye damage and disrupt an officer's ability to manage volatile situations safely. Extending current prohibitions to include corrections and transport officers reinforces a clear message: all law enforcement professionals deserve equal protection and respect.

For these reasons, the Maine Chiefs of Police Association urges this committee to support the passage of LD 1710 and vote "ought to pass."