



City of Brewer Police Department

January 7, 2026

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and Honorable Members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

I am testifying in **opposition** to LD 1646, *“An Act to Amend Maine’s Good Samaritan Laws Regarding Suspected Drug-related Overdoses.”*

Maine’s existing Good Samaritan law is already among the most permissive in the nation, providing immunity for offenses that extend well beyond what most other states allow. LD 1646 proposes to expand those protections even further, and it is critical that the Committee fully understand the practical consequences of that expansion.

The central issue with this bill lies in its language and how it would be applied in real-world situations. Specifically, the bill extends immunity to individuals involved in “a call for assistance for a person exhibiting symptoms of a drug-related overdose.”

Under this proposal, the definition of “symptoms of a drug-related overdose” is broadened to include many indicators of drug impairment that do not necessarily constitute an overdose or medical emergency. As a result, the scope of immunity shifts from protecting individuals during a clear medical crisis to shielding a wide range of criminal behavior whenever drug use is merely suspected.

In practical terms, this means that when law enforcement responds to a call for assistance involving someone under the influence—but not overdosing—those involved could receive immunity from prosecution for a wide array of crimes, including but not limited to:

- Drug trafficking, furnishing, and possession
- Weapons violations
- Theft and burglary
- Assault
- Disorderly conduct
- Criminal trespass
- Indecent exposure

The potential impact on our communities should not be underestimated. How will this affect public spaces such as parks and downtown areas already struggling with open-air drug use, breaches of the peace, and indecent exposure? What does this mean for business owners facing retail theft? For residents whose vehicles are stolen, whose homes and cars are broken into, or whose packages are taken?



City of Brewer Police Department

I encourage you to ask law enforcement officers in your districts how frequently they respond to calls involving criminal behavior where the individuals involved are clearly under the influence of drugs. In many cases, drug impairment is already a central factor in these incidents. Under LD 1646, those same calls could trigger immunity simply because they qualify as a “call for assistance.”

In reality, nearly every call police are dispatched to is, by definition, a call for assistance. If the presence of drug impairment alone is enough to invoke immunity, this bill dramatically limits law enforcement’s ability to protect public safety and hold offenders accountable.

This is a bad bill for Maine’s communities, a good bill for the illicit drug economy, and a bill that risks further normalizing drug use and drug-related criminal activity.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to oppose LD 1646 and not advance this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Chief Christopher M. Martin

Director of Public Safety

City of Brewer, Maine