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President of the Senate

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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**Testimony of Senate President Mattie Daughtry in support of
LD 2165, “An Act to Change Supervisory Authority over the Capitol Police”
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
March 4, 2026**

Good afternoon, Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, my name is Mattie Daughtry. I serve as President of the Maine Senate and proudly represent Senate District 23, including Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, Pownal, Chebeague Island, and part of Yarmouth. I am testifying in favor of LD 2165, “An Act to Change Supervisory Authority over the Capitol Police.”

As a legislator, I know firsthand how important our safety infrastructure is here in the Capitol complex. We are a citizen legislature, working in collaboration with our constituencies to serve and uplift our state together. Our facilities are public buildings, easily accessible to the public because that is who we are and who we are here to serve, the people of Maine.

The world is changing. The risks associated with public service have evolved significantly in recent years. While our tradition of accessibility and public participation is a powerful example of democracy in action, the very openness that defines our Legislature can also expose us to real risks. Members of the Legislature are experiencing new and evolving security concerns, reflecting the changing nature of public service in an increasingly polarized and digitally connected world. According to the Capitol Police, threats against Maine lawmakers have more than doubled since 2023.ⁱ These threats have targeted legislators across the political spectrum. We have seen these threats firsthand, including a bomb threat this session that locked down the building and derailed legislative work.ⁱⁱ

Our Capitol Police officers have responded to these challenges with dedication and kindness. They are trusted members of this community. This bill is not a reflection of dissatisfaction with their service. Rather, it recognizes that as the threat environment changes, our structural framework must evolve as well.

LD 2165 strengthens coordination by aligning the Capitol Police within the Maine State Police supervisory structure. It provides a clearer chain of command and expanded access to training, facilities, and operational resources — while retaining the officers who know this building and its people so well. Leveraging existing state infrastructure and expertise is also a responsible use of taxpayer resources, allowing us to strengthen security without duplicating systems or creating unnecessary bureaucracy.

Our Constitution establishes three separate, co-equal branches of government. As your committee considers this modernization of our safety infrastructure, I urge you to do so in a way that reflects

that structure. While I support this bill and the professionalization opportunities it advances, I also believe the Legislature must retain an appropriate role in overseeing the safety systems that protect our own branch of government. As we strengthen the Capitol Police's structure and training through alignment with the State Police, we should also ensure that clear lines of accountability and input remain with the Legislative branch.

The safety and security of our legislative complex directly affects how safely and effectively this great institution can function every day. If we want to preserve a citizen legislature that remains open, accessible, and reflective of our state, we must ensure that its safety systems are modern, coordinated, and responsive to today's realities. Strengthening the structure that supports our Capitol Police is ultimately about protecting the institution itself AND the people who serve here.

Public safety is a fundamental responsibility of our democracy, and ensuring the safety of this institution allows us to continue doing the people's work without distraction or disruption.

Thank you for your consideration and I urge you to support LD 2165.

ⁱ <https://www.pressherald.com/2025/09/25/threats-against-maine-lawmakers-have-tripled-over-the-last-two-years/>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/local/public-safety/maine-state-house-lockdown-lifted-after-threat/97-c0ab0f38-37c3-4e90-a9f0-34606e371110>