

MATTHEW RHODES

Unity  
LD 484

Testimony in Opposition to LD 2165

Senator, Representative, and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully oppose LD 2165.

This bill does more than reorganize personnel. It quietly eliminates the independent structure of the Capitol Police and folds it into the State Police through a process of gradual replacement. Over time, the Capitol Police will no longer exist as a distinct entity.

That change deserves more scrutiny than this bill gives it.

The Capitol complex is not just another state facility. It is the seat of the legislative branch. Security in that space has traditionally been handled by a dedicated unit with a focused mission and familiarity with the unique environment of legislative operations.

LD 2165 transfers that function into the State Police chain of command, which operates under the executive branch. This creates a situation where the same branch responsible for enforcing the law is also exercising increasing control over the security environment of the Legislature.

Even if unintentional, that shift raises concerns about balance between branches of government.

The bill also relies on what is called “absorption by attrition.” Rather than openly eliminating the Capitol Police, it allows the agency to disappear gradually as positions are replaced. That approach avoids a direct policy debate while still producing a permanent structural change.

If the intent is truly to eliminate the Capitol Police as a distinct entity, that proposal should be made plainly and debated on its own merits.

At a minimum, the Legislature should retain clear authority over the security of its own facilities, and any restructuring should preserve that independence rather than dilute it.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote “Ought Not to Pass.”

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,