



Shenna Bellows
Secretary of State

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

TESTIMONY OF SHENNA BELLOWS, SECRETARY OF STATE DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Before the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
and State and Local Government

February 17, 2023

LD 258. An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2023, June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025.

Senators Rotundo and Nangle, Representatives Sachs and Stover, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and State and Local Government, my name is Shenna Bellows and I am the Secretary of State. I am here today to present testimony in support of those items presented in the 2024-2025 Biennial Budget for the Department of the Secretary of State.

Department information begins on page **A-622** of the **Budget Document** with the first initiative on page **A-623**.

Administration - Archives 0050

There are 10 General Fund initiatives:

1. Initiative: Establishes one Archivist II position and provides funding for related All Other Costs. The Personal Services request is **\$79,165 in FY2023-24 and \$83,904 in FY2024-25**. The All Other request is **\$11,207 in FY2023-24 and \$2,796 in FY2024-25**.

The Maine State Archives houses a vast collection of judicial records which are accessed more frequently than any other collection. The Judicial collection contains the earliest records (dated to 1639) and largest collection (easily 1/3 of the paper storage). Archives staff devote the equivalent of 1.5 full-time positions to service and support this collection. An Archivist II position designated for judicial records will allow better service for this collection with someone specialized in its unique legal requirements and make the collection more accessible to the public.

2. Initiative: Provides funding for the approved reorganization of one Office Associate II position to an Office Specialist I position. The Personal Services request is **\$5,061 in FY2023-24 and \$5,059 in FY2024-25.**

This management-initiated reorganization from an Office Associate II position to an Office Specialist I position was approved by the Bureau of Human Resources on May 17, 2022.

3. Initiative: Provides funding for the approved reorganization of one Inventory & Property Associate II position to one Archivist II position. The Personal Services request is **\$4,686 in FY2023-24 and \$4,899 in FY 2024-25.**

This management-initiated reorganization from an Inventory & Property Associate I position to an Archivist II position was approved by the Bureau of Human Resources on August 24, 2022.

4. Initiative: Establishes one Digital Archivist II position and provides funding for related All Other costs. The Personal Services request is **\$79,165 in FY2023-24 and \$83,904 in FY2024-25.** The All Other request is **\$11,207 in FY2023-24 and \$2,796 in FY2024-25.**

Maine Agencies are shifting away from paper-based records to create and maintain records in a digital format. This new phase for digital record keeping requires additional Maine State Archives staff to properly manage and process those records. Currently there is only one archivist on staff for digital records, but the volume of digital state records is much more than one person can handle. To keep up with the demands of state agencies and for public access, an additional staff person will be required.

5. Initiative: Establishes one Archives Imaging Specialist position and provides funding for related All Other Costs. The Personal Services request is **\$90,092 in FY2023-24 and \$95,095 in FY2024-25.** The All Other request is **\$11,207 in FY2023-24 and \$2,796 in FY2024-25.**

There is currently only one staff person in the Archives Imaging Lab. 21st century researchers are seeking records and research material available online. To reach the widest possible audience across Maine and to reduce the need for frequent handling of fragile historical material for long-term preservation, one additional Archives Imaging Specialist position is needed to properly image large format and bound material to archival preservation standards, to safely image our most fragile historical documents, and to scan and convert imaging from microfilm. For example, the current Imaging Specialist has worked on the same project to digitally image the earliest 45 journals of the Maine State Legislature

for the past three years. It is estimated, it will take him another year to complete the project. With an additional staff person, Archives could complete such projects in half the time and make more state records available to the public.

6. Initiative: Establishes one Photographer II position and provides funding for related All Other costs. The Personal Services request is **\$84,064 in FY2023-24 and \$89,044 in FY2024-25**. The All Other request is **\$11,208 in FY2023-24 and \$2,796 in FY2024-25**.

Converts one existing document scanner contractor position to a permanent state employee. Researchers now expect and require online access to state records whenever possible. For the past 6 years, the Maine State Archives has paid contract staff members to scan historical documents for online access, with only an estimated 10% of Archival holdings scanned and available online to date. The need to scan state records and create digital preservation copies of those records will not go away, as archives only grow. At the current rate of scanning documents, with current resources, the State Archives estimates it will take at least 73 years to digitally image every box of records currently held by the Maine State Archives. This is an on-going need and an important role for modernization, continued preservation and public access into the 21st century.

7. Initiative: Provides one-time funding to match a federal grant from the National Historical Publications & Records Commission. The All Other request is **\$20,000 in FY2024-25**.

This is funding for the Maine Historical Records Advisory Board. They will apply for a two year, \$80,000 grant from National Historical Publications & Records Commission for training and re-granting to records-collecting organizations across the State of Maine to include libraries and town offices. The grant requires a 25% cost match. The project will begin January 2025.

8. Initiative: Provides one-time funding for a box truck with a lift gate to retrieve and transport boxes to the State Records Center. The Capital Expenditures request is **\$171,254 in FY2023-24**.

The Maine State Archives regularly uses a box truck (with liftgate) for retrieval and transportation of boxes to the State Records Center and archival records storage area. The current box truck is 14 years old. Recently, the liftgate broke and central fleet management struggled to repair it due to a lack of parts still available for the old model. A new box truck, with lift gate, is needed to continue operations.

9. Initiative: Establishes one limited-period Director Special Projects position through December 31, 2026 and provides funding for related All Other costs. The Personal Services request is **\$110,111 in FY2023-24 and \$116,135 in FY2024-25**. The All Other request is **\$61,207 in FY2023-24 and \$52,796 in FY2024-25**.

This position will serve as the Sesquicentennial Program Coordinator and will plan and coordinate statewide cultural activities for the nation's Sesquicentennial in 2026 to coordinate activities and events for America's 250. The Program Coordinator will need to travel throughout the state, convene planning meetings, and develop some initial marketing to establish the statewide program.

10. Initiative: Provides funding for repayment of Certificate of Participation loan principal and interest for information systems ongoing modernization project. The All Other request is **\$247,874 in FY2023-24 and \$247,874 in FY2024-25**.

Provides funding for repayment of Certificate of Participation loan principal and interest for information systems ongoing modernization project.

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Department of Administrative and Financial Services and Department of Secretary of State; financing agreements for ongoing modernization of customer service and information services systems. Pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 1587, the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, in cooperation with the Treasurer of State, on behalf of the Department of Secretary of State, may enter into financing agreements in fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25 for improvements to the department's customer service system, technology infrastructure and data centers; updating of department software and hardware; ongoing modernization of databases, storage and other components; and improved security of personally identifiable information and other confidential data. The financing agreements entered into may not exceed \$5,700,000 in fiscal year 2023-24 and \$2,500,000 in fiscal year 2024-25 in principal costs, 7 years in duration and a 7% interest rate. The annual principal and interest costs must be paid from the appropriate line category appropriations in the Department of Secretary of State accounts.

This concludes my testimony on the items included in the Governor's proposed 2024-2025 biennial budget.

I would be happy to answer questions now or at the work session.

Thank you.