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April 25, 2023

Testimony of Representative Jessica Fay introducing
**LD 1409, An Act to Require Reimbursement When a Municipality Hires First
Responders Whose Training Costs Were Incurred by Another Municipality**
Before the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government

Good afternoon, Senator Nangle, Representative Stover and honorable members of the State and Local Government Committee. I am Jessica Fay, and I represent House District 86. I regret that I can't be with you today to present this bill in person, but I am grateful to Senator Nangle for stepping in.

Thank you for the opportunity to sponsor **LD 1409, An Act to Require Reimbursement When a Municipality Hires First Responders Whose Training Costs Were Incurred by Another Municipality**.

Last fall, the Chief of Raymond Fire and Rescue sent me a message asking that "something be done" about the cost that the Town of Raymond was incurring for training and other expenses associated with new hires, only to have those hires leave shortly after the training had been completed.

I recognize this is a complicated issue. It is a workforce shortage issue, an issue of pay and compensation, a rural public safety issue and an issue of fairness. Further complications exist when a first responder works part-time at one job and full-time for another municipality. In order to simplify the bill, we decided to have this reimbursement only apply to full-time employees in fire/rescue. I want to be very clear, the goal of this bill is in no way meant to abrogate the ability of fire and rescue personnel from working in multiple jurisdictions or from taking any job they choose. The goal is simply to reimburse a municipality, who has paid for training in expectation that an employee will continue to work for that municipality, if that employee moves on.

The bill is drafted based on the system currently in place for attendance at the Criminal Justice Academy, which I understand isn't a perfect framework for what is a common-sense policy idea.

This committee understands the issues facing municipalities and the challenges of hiring and crafting budgets, and this is an issue I am confident that we can all work together on to find an appropriate mechanism to make it work.

District 86: Casco, Frye Island, Raymond and Part of Poland

Whether we land on a potential fixed number, a percentage over time, a common pool of funds that would be there for training or some other suggestion that could come up in the next few weeks, I am hopeful that we can work together along with all the stakeholders to address what seems to be a common concern, particularly for smaller more rural Departments.

Thank you for your time and attention. I look forward to the work we will do together.