



Maine Sheriffs' Association

"One Team, One Mission"

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May 2, 2023

L.D. 1742 – An Act to Enhance the Use of Critical Incident Stress Management Teams and to Require Peer Team Support

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice, my name is Ken Mason. I am the Kennebec County Sheriff and I'm here today on behalf of the Maine Sheriffs Association.

Maine Sheriffs discussed L.D. 1742 – An Act to Enhance the Use of Critical Incident Stress Management Teams and to Require Peer Team Support. The position of the sheriffs is **Neither For Nor Against**.

I'd like to begin by thanking the bill's sponsor, Representative Gramlich, for bringing forward this important bill. When sheriffs discussed this bill, there were many positive stories about ongoing programs currently overseen by sheriffs across the state.

Critical Incident Stress Management is an essential tool in the well-being of public safety servants and their staffs. CISM is a multi-faceted approach to crisis response and its importance cannot be overstated.

Sheriffs did note concerns about preserving existing programs. We feel that some of the language is ambiguous as it pertains to those sheriffs' offices that already have these programs in operation. Would this bill mandate that established programs be redesigned for Maine Emergency Management Agency oversight? We are also concerned about the potential for an unfunded mandate that would burden smaller agencies. We would like to know more about how this would impact different agencies and what resources would be made available for implementation.

Critical Incident Stress Management teams are a positive investment and smart approach to protecting those professionals that navigate devastating events as part of their everyday work. We look forward to working with this committee and the sponsor to clarify the language on L.D. 1742.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Ken Mason
Maine Sheriffs Association