



**MAINE MUNICIPAL
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Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

Neither For Nor Against

LD 1802- *An Act to Add Certain Volunteer Firefighters to the Definition of "Volunteer Firefighter"*

May 5, 2023

Sen. Beebe-Center, Rep. Salisbury and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, my name is Rebecca Graham, and I providing placeholder testimony neither for nor against LD 1802, *An Act to Add Certain Volunteer Firefighters to the Definition of "Volunteer Firefighter"* on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association, which represents the interests of municipal government before the Legislature. The positions of the Association are established by our 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC), who are elected by the councils and selectboards of municipalities in each of Maine's 35 Senate districts and they have not had the opportunity to review the language of this bill yet.

However, it is important for the committee to understand that this section of law is referred to under the workers compensation statutes to define employees who are fire fighters. As drafted, the language will eliminate volunteer fire fighters who are true volunteers, and potentially those who receive annual or quarterly payments for their volunteerism based on calls, meetings and training.

Under 39-A §102, sub-11(2) The definitions of employee for the purposes of eligibility to workers compensation benefits provides an exemption specific to cover unpaid or stipend firefighters.

"Firefighters, including volunteer firefighters who are active members of a volunteer fire association as defined in Title 30-A, section 3151; volunteer emergency medical services persons as defined in Title 32, section 83, subsection 12;"...

For these reasons, the committee should careful consider amending this section in balance with the desired outcome by the sponsor and make sure that the outcome does not unfairly strip firefighters of current or future benefits for their service to their communities in all forms.