



Janet T. Mills
Governor

Michael J. Sauschuck
Commissioner

STATE OF MAINE
Department of Public Safety
MAINE STATE POLICE

45 Commerce Drive - Suite 1
Augusta, Maine 04333



William Ross
Colonel

LTC. Brian P. Scott
Deputy Chief

Testimony of Lieutenant Tyler Stevenson
Maine State Police

In Opposition of (1561)

An Act to Restore Firearm Rights and Hunting Privileges to Persons Previously Convicted of Certain Nonviolent Felony Crimes.

Sponsored by Representative Perkins
Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and honorable members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety: My name is Lieutenant Tyler Stevenson, and I am providing testimony on behalf of the Maine State Police and the Maine Department of Public Safety to testify in opposition of LD 1561, "An Act to Restore Firearm Rights and Hunting Privileges to Persons Previously Convicted of Certain Nonviolent Felony Crimes."

This bill would allow people who have been convicted of certain firearm disqualifying crimes to submit a request to the Department of Public Safety to have their firearms rights restored. The Department of Public Safety is then required to review this person's criminal history to ensure the person is eligible to have their firearms rights restored. If the person is found to be eligible, the Department of Public Safety must then notify the court having jurisdiction over the crime for which the person was convicted in and restore the person's rights.

Without an increase in headcount, the Department of Public Safety doesn't have the capacity to fulfill the additional responsibilities that would result from this bill. The tasks will fall to the Maine State Police Weapons and Licensing Unit, which consists of a State Police Sergeant, a Detective and two Office Associates. The Weapons and Professional Licensing Unit is already responsible for processing thousands of concealed handgun permits from 360 Maine Towns and all nonresident applications. There are statutory requirements regarding the processing of these permits that must be completed within a certain timeframe. Additionally, the Weapons and Licensing Unit is also responsible for processing licenses of all Private Investigators, Contract Security Companies and polygraphers in the State of Maine. Without additional headcount, shouldering the added responsibility this bill will require is unattainable.

We also have concerns on how this bill will impact the National Instant Criminal Background Checks system, also known as NICS. The Maine State Police State Bureau of Identification (SBI) is tasked with submitting firearm prohibiting information to NICS. It is unknown if a court-ordered restoration will be accepted by NICS, which would allow the person to be able to purchase a firearm at a federal firearm licensed dealer.

++ INTEGRITY ++ ++ FAIRNESS ++ ++ COMPASSION ++ ++ EXCELLENCE ++

(207) 624-7200 (Voice)

(207) 287-3659 (Fax)

TTY User: 711



Janet T. Mills
Governor

Michael J. Sauschuck
Commissioner

STATE OF MAINE
Department of Public Safety
MAINE STATE POLICE

45 Commerce Drive - Suite 1
Augusta, Maine 04333



William Ross
Colonel

LTC. Brian P. Scott
Deputy Chief

Another consideration that must be realized is that a person convicted of the crimes this bill is looking to restore, is not only prohibited in the State of Maine, but they are also prohibited Federally. It is unknown if the Federal Government will recognize the restoration of a person's rights to possess firearms as outlined in this bill. We cannot support a bill that requires our staff to recommend a person's firearm rights be restored in the Maine while the person still remains federally prohibited.

On behalf of the State Police and the Department of Public Safety, we appreciate your careful consideration of these issues. Thank you for your time and we would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Respectfully,

Lieutenant Tyler Stevenson

++ INTEGRITY ++ ++ FAIRNESS ++ ++ COMPASSION ++ ++ EXCELLENCE ++

(207) 624-7200 (Voice)

(207) 287-3659 (Fax)

TTY User: 711