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THE MAINE SENATE
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Testimony in Support of LD 1889
"An Act to Provide Authorization to Aroostook County to Use the Statewide Radio and Network System"

Presented to the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology
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Good afternoon, Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Energy, Utilities, and Technology. My name is Troy Jackson and I have the honor of serving as Senate President representing the good people of Aroostook County in the Maine Legislature. I apologize for not being there in person, but I am pleased to testify in support of LD 1889 "An Act to Provide Authorization to Aroostook County to Use the Statewide Radio and Network System".

This bill reflects a need amongst rural law enforcement and first responders for reliable access to radio service — something that is not guaranteed in much of Aroostook County. To me, it's only right that we ensure County and local patrols have access to the communications system we already have in place in our state so that they can do their critical work.

Granting Aroostook County access to the towers on the State's Radio Network only makes for greater safety of our communities. As patrols previously conducted by state troopers increasingly become the responsibility of County law enforcement officers, we need to ensure that these officers can communicate efficiently and effectively, especially in emergency situations. Unfortunately, County law enforcement does not have access to this vital communication network.

After filing this bill, I've heard from folks in other rural areas of the state who also struggle with lack of radio service for first responders on the county level. I know that the need for access to radio is not limited to Aroostook County, and I hope you'll consider their comments as well as the bill moves forward.

In the end, the current State Radio and Network System is paid for by taxpayers, and is intended to serve the public interest. It can more fully meet the needs of both taxpayers and of

first responders if it is opened up to Aroostook County and possibly other rural areas lacking in alternative network access

Thank you for your time and I am happy to take any questions before or during the work session