

Testimony neither for nor against

LD 2214, "An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025"

Lewiston City Administrator Heather Hunter

February 28, 2024

Senator Rotundo, Rep. Sachs, Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and other distinguished members of the Appropriations and the Committee on Judiciary, my name is Heather Hunter and I serve as Lewiston's City Administrator. I am here today to testify neither for nor against LD 2214, "An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025". My testimony is specifically related to request for reimbursement for the unbudgeted costs to the City of Lewiston for overtime and counseling costs related to the first responders who responded to the mass shootings and searched for the assailant, Robert Card, after the shootings on October 25.

In the hours and days after the October 25 shooting in the City of Lewiston, our brave first responders worked hard to respond to the needs of the victims of the tragedy as well as to locate and apprehend Mr. Card, who was classified as armed and dangerous. These officers worked around the clock and, naturally, experienced significant emotional trauma as well as significant overtime hours in the process of the manhunt. Given the seriousness of the crimes they were investigating, additional counseling services and wellness time for employees have been necessary as well as overtime hours.

The City of Lewiston had hoped that funds to offset these unforeseen and necessary expenses would be represented in the supplemental budget. Indeed, we are pleased and very grateful that \$5 million has been set aside for medical expenses for the victims of violence in the future. I am here, however, to bring this discrepancy to your attention in the hopes that, together, we can bridge this gap.

Specifically, we are asking for help covering the following expenses:

Overtime for investigation and mass-shooting related event security - \$247,371.84

Post-traumatic wellness time for our first responders - \$230,787.80

Peer support counseling - \$11,850

Dispatch/EMS related overtime during the event and immediately following - \$3,409.52

Other incidental costs, including interpreting - \$4,983.59

For a total of \$498,402.75

Thank you for your consideration.