



**MAINE MUNICIPAL
ASSOCIATION SINCE 1936**

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Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association (MMA)

In Support of State Police 0291 Part A

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

February 29, 2024

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Rebecca Graham, and I am testimony in support of State Police 0291 Initiative under Part A of LD 2214 on behalf of the 70 municipal leaders who were elected by their peers to serve on the Association's Legislative Policy Committee and directed to establish MMA's position on bills of municipal interest.

Every police agency in this state is reliant on the services provided by the Maine State Police that is reliant upon the political will of this body to appropriately resource. As the investigation of criminal activity has become more complex, and mental health resources lacking state-wide, and more acutely in rural areas, investment and appropriate staffing of shared resources are even more crucial.

The growth in significant public safety incidents where coordinated, highly specialized and properly equipped responses are necessary has highlighted this interdependency. They also serve as touchstones for municipal officials to ask critically where the burden of the risk for such technical response belongs; on the community experiencing the incident, or with the state that can invest in maintaining critical high-risk response skills and has a dedicated legal office to mitigate risk.

The Maine State Police are statutorily required and provide policing services for every municipality in the state, including those with organized police agencies. MSP provides services that are not able to be provided in many communities, and many of these services are highly technical and benefit from consistent training and experience that comes from their wide geographic mandate. While all communities share these resources, the nature of the change in threats that law enforcement must answer means these services are increasingly drawn upon to address high risk volatile situations.

For all of these reasons, municipal officials support the increase in patrol staff and leadership positions requested by the Maine State Police and recommended in this bill and the additional bill, LD 2109 voted out of Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee yesterday, to protect and preserve the capacity to respond to emergencies in all communities, including those without an organized police agency available and assist the increased burden experienced by the law enforcement system in our most rural and under resourced counties.

Thank you for considering the municipal perspective on these issues. If you have any questions about the Association's position on these provisions of the supplemental budget bill, please do not hesitate to contact me at rgraham@memun.org or 1-800-452-8786.