

TESTIMONY
OF
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MAINE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Before the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Veterans and
Legal Affairs

Hearing Date: February 27th, 2025

**"An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other
Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law
Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30,
2025, June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027"**

Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Joint Standing
Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs; Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and
members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. My name is Michael
Sauschuck, and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety. I am here today to
testify in support of the biennial budget.

Overall Budget

Maine – like many states – is facing a tight budget environment. The Mills Administration
has spent months carefully developing a balanced budget proposal to preserve the programs
lawmakers and Maine people support, including education, revenue sharing, public safety, higher
education, and school meals, while also protecting the long-term fiscal health of Maine.

Ultimately, we took a balanced approach: one that makes some investments - including
operational needs such as technology efficiencies, health and safety improvements, collective
bargaining impacts, etc. - that proposes some spending cuts, and that makes some targeted revenue

increases. We know these proposals are difficult and appreciate that you will consider them with an open mind.

We look forward to working with you over the coming months to enact a budget that supports our greatest asset of all: the people of Maine.

Departmental Overview

The Department of Public Safety was established to serve the people by providing, coordinating, and leading a responsive and comprehensive public safety system to protect their lives, rights, and properties. This broad mission is accomplished with 693 positions spread across 10 bureaus. The Bureaus are Administration, Capitol Police, Consolidated Emergency Communications, Emergency Medical Services, Fire Marshal's Office, Gambling Control, Highway Safety, Maine Criminal Justice Academy, Maine Drug Enforcement Agency, and the Maine State Police.

Gambling Control Unit

I will begin today on page A-593 with Gambling Control. The Gambling Control Unit (the Unit) supports a five-member Board that licenses and regulates companies and employees associated with two casinos, the distribution of casino-related equipment, and advance deposit wagering allowing bets on horse races throughout the country. The Unit also regulates fantasy sports contests, sports wagering, and charitable non-profit Games of Chance, Beano, and Bingo.

The first initiative establishes one Auditor II position and provides funding for related all other costs. This position is critical as there are only two auditors in the unit that oversee all areas including the Casinos, Advanced Deposit Wagering, Charitable Gaming, Fantasy Contests, and Sports Wagering. The department is able to fund this position using the other special revenue

funds.

The second initiative provides funding for increases to statewide technology services and impacts the majority of the programs in the department. With the increase in MaineIT Rates the Department of Public Safety will experience an 18% increase in costs from \$6.6 million to \$7.8 million to maintain current services.

The third initiative adjusts funding to align with anticipated revenues. This adjustment to the funding is necessary to align with revenues as recommended in the December 1, 2024 forecast of the Revenue Forecasting Committee.

This concludes my testimony. Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.