



Maine Sheriffs' Association

"One Team, One Mission"

Sheriff Scott Nichols, President

Sheriff Troy Morton, 1st Vice-President, Sheriff Scott Kane, 2nd Vice-President – Sheriff Barry Curtis, Secretary –
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March 17, 2025

**TESTIMONY OF
SHERIFF TROY MORTON
MAINE SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION**

**LD 717 - An Act to Amend the Maine Criminal Code Governing Restitution to Include the
Costs of All Analyses of Suspected Illegal Drugs**

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee of Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Sheriff Troy Morton. I have the privilege of serving as Vice-President of the Maine Sheriffs Association and I am here today on their behalf.

Your Maine Sheriffs have taken the position of **SUPPORTING LD 717 - An Act to Amend the Maine Criminal Code Governing Restitution to Include the Costs of All Analyses of Suspected Illegal Drugs.**

The Maine Sheriffs' Association has embraced areas of criminal justice reform and identifying best practices when it comes to the drug epidemic impacting our state. We have remained steadfast to approach this issue through enforcement, treatment, and awareness.

A key aspect of the enforcement phase is the proper and certified testing of dangerous drugs seized during an investigation and prosecution. Our statutes require certified weighting and testing of controlled substances before prosecution. Many drug laws categorize substances based on weight, so a certified weight is obtained first. Follow-up testing is then conducted to analyze the chemical composition, which analysts use to identify drug types such as cocaine, heroin, fentanyl, and others.

Currently, certified drug testing is being done at the expense of the investigating agency. Often during complex cases, several pieces of evidence are submitted for testing. For example, a recent drug investigation in Penobscot County produced 10 pieces of evidence. Each test costs \$155.00, these expenses are being passed onto taxpayers through the county's budget.

A key component of the substance use disorder treatment process is accountability. If an individual is convicted of trafficking scheduled drugs, and their actions were primarily motivated by profit, that individual should bear responsibility for the costs associated with certified testing.

Your Maine Sheriffs ask you to vote **OUGHT TO PASS**.

I am happy to answer questions you may have now or during the work session.