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Department of Public Safety
MAINE STATE POLICE

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Testimony of Lieutenant Mathew Casavant
Maine State Police
In Opposition (1049)

An Act to Eliminate the Duty to Inform a Law Enforcement Officer When Carrying a Concealed Handgun Without a Permit

Sponsored by Representative Poirier
Committee on Judiciary

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and other distinguished members of the joint standing committee on Judiciary, my name is Lieutenant Mathew Casavant, and I am here to represent the Maine State Police and the Maine Department of Public Safety to testify in opposition of LD 1049, "An Act to Eliminate the Duty to Inform a Law Enforcement Officer When Carrying a Concealed Handgun Without a Permit."

The Maine Department of Public Safety and Maine State Police is opposed to LD 1049 due to possible safety concerns. As an officer, all motor vehicle stops are inherently dangerous. The moments approaching a motor vehicle on a "routine" traffic stop are some of the most dangerous situations an officer can face. Adding a concealed firearm into the equation increases those safety concerns for both the occupant and the officer. Our concern is that the individual who is stopped is under stress already from the law enforcement encounter and will open a glove box or center console to retrieve their paperwork and forget they have a firearm in the vehicle. This could cause an alarm from the law enforcement officer and create a confrontation which is unnecessary. Keeping this notification provision in place could alleviate some of the potential for conflict.

Those who undergo the application process and obtain a concealed carry permit in the State of Maine have undergone a background investigation and are required to have completed a handgun safety course. There is no requirement for those who do not possess a concealed carry permit to have any handgun training or undergo a background check. Keeping this important notification currently written into the law is the safest and best-case scenario.

On behalf of the State Police and the Department of Public Safety, we appreciate your careful consideration of these issues. Thank you for your time and we would be happy to work with the sponsor and the committee at the work session.

Respectfully,

Lieutenant Mathew Casavant

++ INTEGRITY ++ ++ FAIRNESS ++ ++ COMPASSION ++ ++ EXCELLENCE ++

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