



Janet T. Mills
Governor

STATE OF MAINE
Department of Public Safety
MAINE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACADEMY
15 Oak Grove Road
Vassalboro, Maine 04989



Michael J. Sauschuck
Commissioner

Jack D. Peck, Jr.
Director

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee.

My name is Jack Peck, and I am the Director of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy (MCJA) and I am here today to oppose L.D. 1295, an Act to waive basic law enforcement training requirements for full-time law enforcement officers who have successfully completed equivalent courses in other jurisdictions.

Maine statute allows the MCJA Board of Trustees (Board) to waive basic training requirements for newly hired law enforcement officers that have completed an equivalent training program. This bill, if passed, would remove the Board of Trustees authority to evaluate and use their discretion to grant or deny a waiver to the Basic Law Enforcement Training Program (BLETP). The new language in L.D. 1295 removes that discretion and authority by stating the Board of Trustees **MUST** grant a waiver.

MCJA staff currently reviews each individual waiver request and conducts an in-depth analysis. This process includes a one-to-one comparison of course curriculum as compared to the State of Maine training to the comparable training program. Staff then makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees to either grant or deny the waiver. The applicants' out-of-state training must meet the following standards:

- 90% of the BLETP curriculum which equates to 648 hours.
- 75% of the BLETP curriculum and required to take Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) and Crash Reporting. This equates to 540 Hours.
- All applicants are required to complete Maine Crash Report Training.

A current trend has been that out-of-state Academies are unwilling to provide curriculums with goals and objectives and will only provide a syllabus with the total hours for their program. This creates a situation where a waiver will become dependent on several other variables beyond the syllabus and hours. These include in-service training hours, years of service and higher education.

All of these factors are considered while processing an out-of-state BLETP Waiver. This information is then submitted to the Board of Trustees to consider if the applicant is suitable for a BLETP Waiver by the MCJA Training Coordinator.

As evidence of the desire for experienced out-of-state law enforcement candidates to relocate to Maine and enhanced agency recruitment, we have seen a tremendous increase in applications for a BLETP waiver.

Between 2020 and 2022, the Board reviewed and granted eighty-six out-of-state waiver requests. The Board reviewed and granted fifty such waivers in 2023 and fifty-eight in 2024. The fifty-eight approved waivers this past year in comparison, would almost be the size of a typical BLETP class.



Janet T. Mills
Governor

STATE OF MAINE
Department of Public Safety
MAINE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACADEMY
15 Oak Grove Road
Vassalboro, Maine 04989



Michael J. Sauschuck
Commissioner

Jack D. Peck, Jr.
Director

In closing, L.D. 1295 would remove this authority from the eighteen-member Board of Trustees and not allow them to use their many years of training, expertise and experience to review and approve an out-of-state waiver.

Therefore, we oppose this bill. Thank you to the committee for your time and support, and I will try to answer any questions you may have.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack Peck, Jr.".

Jack D. Peck, Jr.