



Jeffrey Timberlake  
Senator, District 17

THE MAINE SENATE  
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333

**LD 1218, “An Act to Allow Certain County Commissioners Who Are Maine Public Employees Retirement System Members to Switch to the Legislative Retirement Program.”**

**Joint Standing Committee on Labor**

**April 9, 2025**

Good morning, Sen. Tipping, Rep. Roeder and members of the joint standing committee on Labor Committee;

My name is Jeff Timberlake, and I represent the people of Senate District 17. I am here today to present LD 1218, “An Act to Allow Certain County Commissioners Who Are Maine Public Employees Retirement System Members to Switch to the Legislative Retirement Program.”

LD 1218 allows county commissioners who are currently members of the Maine Public Employees Retirement System, have previously served in the Maine Legislature, and are eligible to participate in the Legislative Retirement Program to make an election to switch their retirement contributions to that program. This bill ensures that these individuals can continue to build on their vested service in the Legislative Retirement Program, rather than participate in a separate retirement track that many will not see any benefit from.

Until recently, county commissioners in Maine were not enrolled in any retirement plan under MainePERS. While that has now been remedied, commissioners’ contribute to the “Participating Local District A” plan, which has separate vesting and service rules that many will not meet or see benefit from. Without this bill, commissioners only option is to split their retirement contributions between two separate systems.

Here’s what LD 1218 does in practical terms:

1. It gives eligible county commissioners the option—not a mandate—to transfer their retirement contributions from the Participating Local District Plan to the

*Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee \* Government Oversight Committee  
State House (207) 287-1505 \* Fax (207) 287-1527 \* Toll Free 1-800-423-6900 \* TTY 711  
Jeffrey.Timberlake@legislature.maine.gov \* legislature.maine.gov/senate*

- Legislative Retirement Program by submitting a written election within 90 days of the bill's effective date or assuming office, whichever is later.
2. Upon making that election, all previously accrued contributions as a county commissioner under MainePERS are transferred to the Legislative Retirement Program, and all future contributions follow suit.
  3. It ensures that their service as county commissioners is recognized as creditable service under the Legislative Retirement Program, allowing them to build on the time they've already earned as legislators.
  4. Finally, it tasks the Board of Trustees of MainePERS with adopting rules to implement this process smoothly, including transferring funds, coordinating with counties and providing guidance to affected commissioners.

This is a narrow and targeted measure. It only applies to county commissioners who meet specific criteria: They must be current MainePERS members contributing to a defined benefit plan, have prior legislative service and be eligible for the Legislative Retirement Program. Many county commissioners are former legislators and legislative staff members who would appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the Legislative Plan.

I'm sure there will be questions and I look forward to hearing if there are any unintended consequences this bill may bring about. I am willing to work with interested parties to see if we can fix this small problem for a very narrow group of public servants.

Thank you for your time.