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April 16, 2025

*Testimony of Representative Michele Meyer in support of*  
**LD 1105, An Act Concerning Displaced Civilian Federal**  
**Firefighters in Maine**  
*Before the Joint Standing Committee on Labor*

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and esteemed members of the Labor Committee, I am Michele Meyer. I represent the people of southern Maine's District 150, all of Eliot and parts of Kittery and South Berwick. Among them are courageous federal firefighters at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, as well as our dedicated volunteer and public sector firefighters throughout my district. Thank you for the opportunity to express my strong support for **LD 1105, An Act Concerning Displaced Civilian Federal Firefighters in Maine**.

LD 1105 provides essential support for displaced civilian federal firefighters in Maine, specifically those associated with Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, the Naval Computers and Telecommunications Facility in Cutler, and Togus VA Medical Center.

Federal firefighters play a crucial role in safeguarding our communities and the environment from fire risks and other threats to public safety. The firefighters at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard lead efforts in fire prevention, suppression, and emergency medical response. They protect both the facility and the surrounding communities, participating in Fire/EMS Mutual Aid Programs across Southern Maine and in New Hampshire.

The rigorous qualifications and training requirements established by the federal government – including physical fitness, certifications and background checks – ensure that federal firefighters meet high standards of excellence necessary for this demanding profession. Additionally, the Department of Defense's Fire and Emergency Services Certification Program emphasizes the need for continuous education and specialized training. This guarantees that firefighters can effectively handle a wide range of challenges in an evolving field.

Transitioning displaced federal firefighters into local fire and public safety departments in Maine, as this bill would facilitate, provides significant benefits. These firefighters bring extensive training and experience that can enhance community safety and ensure continuity of services. Their familiarity with local risks and protocols helps maintain uninterrupted emergency services, which is vital for public safety.

These facts make hiring displaced firefighters offers a cost-effective staffing solution for local departments, as they require less on-the-job training and can immediately contribute to operational efficiency. Their integration fosters community trust and enhances departmental capacity, leading to faster response times and more effective emergency medical services.

This transition also addresses staffing shortages and retains committed public servants within the firefighting profession. It cultivates opportunities for collaborative training, enhancing the skills of all personnel to tackle diverse risks.

A strong fire and public safety presence is essential for community resilience, especially in the face of climate change and emerging threats. By transitioning these experienced federal firefighters to local roles, we can improve community preparedness and response capabilities.

Supporting this transition demonstrates our commitment to our public servants, many of whom have also served our country in the military, and boosts morale among public safety personnel.

LD 1105 facilitates a smooth transition for federal firefighters into Maine's public safety departments, enhancing community safety while allowing these dedicated individuals to continue their service. I urge you to support this important legislation to ensure they have the tools, resources, and recognition they deserve.

Thank you for your consideration.