



# Town of Brunswick, Maine

INCORPORATED 1739

SANDE UPDEGRAPH – Chair,  
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Senator Pinny Beebe-Center  
Representative Tavis Hasenfus  
Members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and Members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee,

My name is Sande Updegraph and I am the Chair of the Brunswick Town Council. I am speaking in strong support for the passage of LD 1600 – An Act to Provide Regional Support Funding for Municipal Police Departments to Support Special Response Teams.

Brunswick's Police Department is comprised of dedicated and caring professionals that serve our community and other communities when called upon as required by our mutual aid agreements. All of their service is handled with professionalism and dedication no matter whether it is in Brunswick or in neighboring towns.

Since 1985, the Brunswick Police Department has had a Special Response Team (SRT), one of only six (6) certified by the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. This requires that officers receive extra specialized training to maintain Tactical Team Certification preparing them for the most dangerous situations. It also requires special equipment. The Brunswick SRT has been called upon to assist in critical and dangerous situations in the Mid-Coast region and as far away as Norridgewock. It has served to support other law enforcement organizations and in the Lewiston mass shooting incident.

The expense involved to maintain and equip our SRT is significant and is paid entirely by Brunswick taxpayers. The yearly estimate to maintain the SRT is over \$42,000 plus administrative expenses. In fact, in 2024 the Brunswick Town Council voted to replace its aging Special Reserve Vehicle at a cost of \$380,000. Many local police departments wrote letters of support for the new vehicle noting its critical regional need, but all declined to financially contribute to the purchase.

The cost to maintain readiness to respond to a critical need outside of Brunswick is far more than is intended in mutual aid agreements. This level of service cannot be reciprocated in kind. The financial obligation should be shared fairly with those communities who rely on the service.

LD1600 recognizes the statewide need for SRTs and it provides a plan for appropriate cost sharing throughout the state. It will also ensure that the Teams are trained, prepared, and equipped to respond to the worst situations.

Sincerely,

*Sande Updegraph*

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