



# Maine Sheriffs' Association

*"One Team, One Mission"*

**Sheriff Scott Nichols, President**

Sheriff Troy Morton, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, Sheriff Scott Kane, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President – Sheriff Barry Curtis, Secretary –  
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April 28, 2025

**TESTIMONY OF  
SHERIFF JOEL MERRY  
MAINE SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION**

**LD 1725 – An Act Regarding the Membership of and Requirements for  
County Jail Boards of Visitors**

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Joel Merry. I am the sheriff of Sagadahoc County, and I am here on behalf of the Maine Sheriffs Association.

The need for this bill originated from the Maine sheriffs and we **unanimously support LD 1725 - An Act Regarding the Membership of and Requirements for County Jail Boards of Visitors.**

The county and regional jails' boards of visitors are of great importance to all sheriffs. Their insight offers a unique voice intended to provide support and suggestions to all sheriffs. The feedback our boards of visitors provides is a valuable tool in Maine jail operations.

Unintentionally, BOV modifications made during the last legislative session have caused many jails to terminate some essential and invested BOV volunteers. The strict guidelines governing the makeup of boards of visitors are difficult to meet. Sheriffs have been unable to fill board positions if a volunteer didn't meet the finite specifications outlined in MSRA Title 30-A. We consider ourselves fortunate when we can fill our boards and we should not be turning away individuals that are willing to give their contributions of time.

The annual report is of great value to each sheriff, and we encourage our boards of visitors to include sheriffs and lawmakers in their distribution. Requiring a sheriff to then submit a follow-up report to lawmakers is unnecessary. Maine sheriffs invite everyone around this horseshoe to spend time touring our jails. We feel this would be the best use of time for lawmakers and sheriffs.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.