



Maine Chiefs of Police Association
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Statement in opposition to

L.D. 1646, An Act to Amend Maine's Good Samaritan Laws Regarding Suspected Drug-related Overdoses

Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

January 7, 2026

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and honorable members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. My name is Jason Moen. I am the Chief of the Auburn Police Department, and the immediate past president of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association. I am presenting testimony on behalf of the Association in opposition to LD 1646.

The Maine Chiefs of Police Association's mission is straightforward: to strengthen the working relationships among Maine's police leaders, to promote professionalism and consistent standards across the state, and to support the men and women who serve our communities every day. At the heart of that mission is a shared commitment to protecting life and property and upholding the values of our profession.

Our Association supported the Good Samaritan law enacted in 2019 because it encourages people to call for help during an overdose while still allowing law enforcement to conduct an appropriate investigation. That law provides an affirmative defense for both the person experiencing an overdose and the person seeking medical assistance, and it has worked as intended.

LD 1646 goes well beyond that framework.

Our concerns align with those raised by the Maine Department of Public Safety. The bill expands immunity to situations where a person is merely "exhibiting symptoms of a drug-related overdose," using criteria so broad that they could apply to many unrelated medical conditions or to victims of violent crime. Officers could encounter someone who is unconscious, injured, or disoriented and be required to assume immunity before determining whether a crime occurred.

This creates real risk for victims who need protection and for responders who must make quick, informed decisions.

Current law already provides a clear process under 17-A M.R.S. §1112(4), allowing a court to determine immunity after an investigation. LD 1646 would instead preempt that investigation, effectively requiring officers to rule out immunity before they can even assess what happened.

We fully support efforts to save lives and encourage calls for help, but LD 1646 introduces unintended consequences that undermine public safety and hinder the ability to protect victims. For these reasons, the Maine Chiefs of Police Association respectfully urges the Committee to oppose LD 1646.

Thank you for your time and consideration.