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Testimony of Director Michael J. Labbe
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LD 2090

"An Act to Establish a One-year Probationary Period for Public Safety Dispatchers"

Before the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety February 11, 2026

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and distinguished members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I am Michael Labbe Director of the Emergency Communications Bureau at the Department of Public Safety, and appear before you today in support of LD 2090, An Act to Establish a One-year Probationary Period for Public Safety Dispatchers.

The required training varies for a Public Safety Dispatcher or Emergency Communications Specialist if they work at a PSAP or non-PSAP. PSAPS are required to attend ETC, EMD, EFD, PRO-QA, NG 911 and TOC Training totaling 18 days of training outside the center. While non-PSAP only attend ETC and TOC, totaling 10 days of training outside the center. Each Communications center varies based on geographic coverage area, number of agencies they perform dispatching services for, type of responders, such as Law Enforcement, Fire, and or Rescue.

I am the director of the three PSAP's operated by the State of Maine, each of the 3 centers have different duties and responsibilities and we currently have a 6-month probation period. With the required 18 days of training out of the center, with regular days off it takes almost a month of training time away leaving just over 5 months in the probation period. Emergency Communications is a high stress and demanding profession; there is a lot of information that needs to be learned by new team members in a short amount of time. A 12-month probation period gives all centers, regardless of size, geographic coverage, or number of agencies serviced, adequate time to assess team members and help them pass the training program and successfully complete probation.

Michael J. Labbe

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