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THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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**Testimony of Senate President Mattie Daughtry in support of
LD 695, “An Act Regarding the Laws of the State of Maine”
Before the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government
February 18, 2026**

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Salisbury, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government, my name is Mattie Daughtry. I serve as President of the Maine Senate and proudly represent Senate District 23, including Brunswick, Freeport, Harpswell, Pownal, Chebeague Island, and part of Yarmouth. I am pleased to testify in support of LD 695 (as amended by the sponsor’s amendment), “An Act Regarding the Laws of the State of Maine,” and I want to thank Senator Pierce for bringing forth this bill.

LD 695 establishes a Legislator Residential Security Program to mitigate the increased risks to the physical security of legislators in their residences. The bill creates a nonlapsing Legislator Residential Security Fund administered by the Legislative Council and authorizes the installation, monitoring, and maintenance of home security systems for current members, subject to available funds and policies adopted by the Council.

I want to speak candidly about why this matters.

In our state, legislators are accessible by design. Maine has always had a citizen legislature. We live in our communities. We shop at the same grocery stores as our constituents, answer our doors when folks knock, go to school concerts, town meetings, and ball games. That accessibility is something I deeply value about serving in this great state. It is also one of the greatest strengths of our government. But the world has changed.

The risks associated with public service have evolved significantly in recent years. Personal information is easier to access than ever before, and doxxing rates for elected officials are at an all-time high in our state. While most disagreements remain respectful, it only takes a split second for things to take a dangerous turn.

According to reporting from Maine Capitol Policeⁱ, threats against Maine lawmakers have more than doubled since 2023 — increasing from just over 20 reported threats that year to more than 50 in 2024, and continuing to rise. These threats have targeted legislators across the political spectrum, regardless of party affiliation or political stance. The Maine State House has had to be evacuatedⁱⁱ in the past due to bomb threats that mentioned sitting lawmakers and legislative spaces.

These patterns of intimidation aren’t limited to the halls of the Capitol itself. Swatting, which is the false reporting of emergencies meant to provoke an armed police response, has occurred

against Maine officials' homes as well, unfortunately demonstrating that threats can follow elected officials to the places where they live and raise their families.

And Maine is not alone. In other parts of the country, we have seen how quickly rhetoric and targeted harassment can escalate. Last year, a man posing as a law enforcement officer went to the homes of Minnesota legislators in the early morning hours. In what authorities described as a coordinated, politically motivated attack, he shot and killed former Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman and her husband, as well as targeting and wounding a state senator and his wife. This bill is not about perks or prestige. It's about making sure that when any of us goes home at the end of the day, our families feel safe in their own space.

A basic, professionally installed and monitored home security system is a practical, preventative measure. It doesn't make us less accessible. It doesn't shield us from accountability. It simply acknowledges that serving in public office today comes with new realities. It reflects a simple principle: it is far better to take reasonable, responsible precautions now than to wish we had after something has already happened.

If we want people from all backgrounds — young parents, working professionals, retirees, first-time candidates — to continue stepping forward to serve, we have to recognize the real-world pressures they face. Providing reasonable security options is a prudent and proportional response. No one should have to weigh their family's safety against their desire to serve their community and their state.

Protecting legislators' homes is ultimately about protecting Maine's citizen legislature. It ensures that service remains possible for people from all walks of life and not just those who can afford to manage heightened security concerns on their own.

I respectfully urge the Committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 695.

Thank you for your consideration.

ⁱ <https://www.pressherald.com/2025/09/25/threats-against-maine-lawmakers-have-tripled-over-the-last-two-years/>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.bangordailynews.com/2024/03/08/central-maine/bomb-threat-shuts-down-maine-state-house/>