

TESTIMONY
OF
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MAINE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Before the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Criminal
Justice and Public Safety

Hearing Date: February 25th, 2026

**“An Act Making Unified Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of
State Government, General Fund and Other Funds, and Changing Certain Provisions of the
Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending
June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027”**

Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and members of the Joint Standing
Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs; Senator Beebe-Center, Representative
Hasenfus, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety.
My name is Michael Sauschuck, and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety.
I am here today to testify in support of LD 2212.

Overall Budget

This is the final budget proposal from the Administration. The proposal delivers financial relief to
Maine people, preserves programs lawmakers and Maine people support, and addresses some
emergent issues, including impacts of new federal legislation. Governor Mills’ guiding belief has
always been that our strongest asset is the people of Maine and that’s why this budget, like those in
the past, seeks to invest in and support them. We look forward to working with the Legislature in the
coming weeks to enact a balanced budget that supports Maine people and protects the fiscal health of
our state

Departmental Overview

The Department of Public Safety was established to serve the people by providing, coordinating, and leading a responsive and comprehensive public safety system to protect their lives, rights, and properties. This broad mission is accomplished with 699 positions spread across 10 bureaus. The Bureaus are Administration, Capitol Police, Consolidated Emergency Communications, Emergency Medical Services, Fire Marshal's Office, Gambling Control, Highway Safety, Maine Criminal Justice Academy, Maine Drug Enforcement Agency, and the Maine State Police.

Initiatives Impacting Multiple Programs

Before discussing each of our programs individually I would like to start with the one item that impacts multiple programs in our Department: reclassification/reorganizations. We have included a supplemental document (page 3) for reference and to assist you in navigating the budget document to find where each of these items can be located.

Reclassification/Reorganization

There is a longstanding process in place to evaluate proper classification of positions and determine, through a functional job analysis, whether a position meets the requirements for reclassification, including pay adjustment. The State's collective bargaining unit agreements include negotiated language related to this process. Reclasses may be employee or management initiated. Approved employee-initiated actions include a retroactive pay component back to the date the request was signed. Only approved reclasses are included in our budget requests. These initiatives are to request funding for the approved action, which is required before the reclassification can be processed and paid. These initiatives are located in Computer Crimes (A-106), Maine Criminal Justice Academy (A-107), and Fire Marshal Office (A-108).

Department of Public Safety Supplemental Document to Supplemental Budget Testimony

Reclassifications and Reorganizations

1. Computer Crimes (A-106) - Provides funding for the approved reorganization range change of 2 Supervisor Computer Forensic Lab positions from range 29 to range 31.
2. Maine Criminal Justice Academy (A-107) - Provides funding for the approved reclassification of one MCJA Assistant Director position to a Public Service Manager II position retroactive to May 29, 2025.
3. Fire Marshal Office (A-108) - Provides funding for the approved reorganization range change of one Public Safety Manager II position from range 29 to range 32.
4. Fire Marshal Office (A-108) - Provides funding for the approved reorganization of 3 Public Safety Inspector III positions to 3 Public Safety Inspector Supervisor positions retroactive to August 21, 2024, and All Other related costs.

Administration - Public Safety

I will begin today on page A-106 with Administration- Public Safety Program. This Program is the Commissioner's Office, and it oversees the activities and programs of the bureaus and offices, undertakes comprehensive planning, develops and implements procedures and practices to promote economy and coordination within the department and actively seeks cooperation between the department and all other law enforcement entities in the State. The office houses the public information office and coordinates with the Department of Administrative and Financial Services for information technology, financial, and human resource services.

The only initiative for this program establishes one Public Service Coordinator I position and provides funding for related all other costs. The Commissioner's Office currently only has three positions: the Commissioner, Assistant to the Commissioner, and the Public Information Officer. This is a very low number for a department with ten bureaus and almost 700 employees. This position will assist in rulemaking, department-wide training, procurement processes such as redlining, grant applications, grant management, and operationalizing other crucial public safety initiatives in a timely and efficient manner. This position is internally funded and is critical to the long-term success of the Department of Public Safety.

Capitol Police – Bureau of

The next program, the Bureau of Capitol Police (Capitol Police), begins on page A-106. The Capitol Police is a full-service law enforcement agency responsible for the safety of the people and the security of the buildings that make up Maine's seat of government. The Capitol Police patrol the State owned or controlled property in Augusta, enforces laws, including parking and traffic regulations, and responds to alarms and other calls for help or assistance on two campuses.

The Capitol Police night watchpersons check the security of approximately 50 State owned buildings and properties in Augusta and Hallowell at night and on weekends.

The Department of Health and Human Services has traditionally contracted with Capitol Police to provide law enforcement and security at the Riverview Psychiatric facility. This program is staffed by one Sergeant and 4 officers.

The only initiative for this program transfers 4 Capitol Police Officer positions and one Capital Police Sergeant position from Other Special Revenue Funds to General Fund within the same program and provides funding to cover portions of the positions shorted from an initiative (HUM F-A-1407) and All Other related costs. These five positions were previously funded through an MOU between the Department of Public Safety (PUS), Capitol Police program and the Department of Health and Human Services (HUM), Riverview Psychiatric Center program and Disproportionate Share-Riverview Psychiatric Center program. These two DHHS programs have determined that they no longer need these specialized services in house at this level and have submitted an initiative (HUM F-A-1407) to reduce General Fund funding by \$503,555 which was previously used to fund these positions. These positions remain crucial, however, to maintain appropriate staffing levels to accomplish the increasingly dynamic mission of the Capitol Police.

Computer Crimes

The next program, Computer Crimes, begins on page A-106. Since its inception in 2000 as a task force, the unit has investigated thousands of cases of child exploitation and analyzed the associated computers and data storage devices. Additionally, the Unit has evolved into the State's technology support solution for criminal investigations to include fraud, theft, threatening, robbery, stalking, child abduction and homicide cases. This program only has one initiative which was explained earlier.

The only initiative provides funding for the approved reorganization range change of 2 Supervisor Computer Forensic Lab positions from range 29 to range 31.

Criminal Justice Academy

The next program to be discussed, Criminal Justice Academy (the Academy), begins on page A-107. The Academy is the facility for training and certification of all criminal justice personnel which includes the basic training program for law enforcement officers, correctional officers, emergency communications dispatchers, judicial marshals, harbor masters and shellfish wardens. It is the training facility for all in-service classes which include supervision and executive training, tactical and evidence collection training and many specialized instructor development training courses.

In addition to the full-time staff, the Academy relies heavily on volunteer instructors from state, county and municipal law enforcement agencies, county and state corrections agencies and other criminal justice fields. The Academy provides many instructor development classes so that these students can be future volunteer instructors. This partnership philosophy has been supported by the Police Chiefs and Sheriffs in Maine to provide very cost-effective training to their respective agencies.

The only initiative provides funding for the approved reclassification of one MCJA Assistant Director position to a Public Service Manager II position retroactive to May 29, 2025.

Emergency Medical Services Stabilization and Sustainability Program

The Emergency Medical Services Stabilization and Sustainability Program was enacted by the 131st Maine Legislature and is administered by Maine Emergency Medical Services in consultation with the board and the Department of Health and Human Services, to provide financial assistance to emergency medical services entities based in the State that are facing immediate risk

of failure, to increase the sustainability, efficiency and resiliency of emergency medical services throughout the State and to help ensure that all residents of the State continue to have access to high-quality, out-of-hospital clinical care provided by the emergency medical services system.

The only initiative provides funding for the baseline in EMS Stabilization and Sustainability Program. This allows the bureau to submit financial orders if necessary to complete and close out the program.

Fire Marshal - Office of

The next program is the Office of the Fire Marshal, beginning on page A-108. The primary mission of the office is to protect the lives and property of those who live, work, or visit the state. The Inspection Division is primarily responsible for the safety of people at public events; in buildings used by the public; in places of assembly; and in healthcare and childcare facilities. The Investigation Division is primarily responsible for the investigation of fires and explosions. They also regulate the storage of explosives, the storage and use of fireworks, and investigate accidents involving mechanical rides.

The first initiative provides funding for the approved reorganization range change of one Public Safety Manager II position from range 29 to ranger 32.

The second initiative establishes one Fire Investigation Sergeant position to oversee the professional development of staff, oversee all training activities, act as a liaison for agencies requesting training programs, monitor mental health initiatives, and establish a statewide juvenile fire setter intervention program. This position will focus on the health and wellness of employees and aims to address many other concerns.

The third initiative provides funding for the approved reorganization of 3 Public Safety Inspector III positions to 3 Public Safety Inspector Supervisor positions retroactive to August 21, 2024 and All Other related costs.

Highway Safety DPS

The next program, Highway Safety, begins on page A-109. The Bureau of Highway Safety promotes behavioral driver safety programs and projects designed to make Maine's roads and highways safe. These programs consist of motor vehicle occupant restraint, child restraint, impaired driving, motorcycle safety, speed enforcement, and the Maine defensive driving program. The bureau also is responsible for the annual planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the Highway Safety Plan for Maine.

The only initiative provides funding to align with anticipated revenues. There are a number of these adjustments in the department, and they are being requested to either align the funding with federal grant revenue or to adjust funding to align with revenues as recommended in the December 1, 2025 forecast of the Revenue Forecasting Committee.

Language Part OOO

This language part can be located on the language document on page 77. This Part makes technical changes to the provisions of the bill requiring the Department of Public Safety to maintain a tracking system for all completed forensic examination kits to add clarity, including by clarifying that a completed forensic examination kit may be processed by either the Maine State Police Crime Laboratory located in Augusta or another accredited laboratory that provides forensic services to law enforcement agencies for the purpose of analyzing forensic examination kits.

Language Part PPP

This language part can be located on the language document on page 83. This Part authorizes the Department of Public Safety to transfer Personal Services to the All Other and Capital Expenditures line categories in an amount up to \$1,008,400 in fiscal year 2025-2026 and \$416,250 in fiscal year 2026-2027. This transfer will fund the Maine Information Analysis Center software contract (\$81,250 annually), a contract for firearms examiner services (\$65,000 annually), eight 40-millimeter launchers (\$13,000), consoles at three Emergency Communication Centers (\$487,000), a roof replacement at the K-9 office (\$19,500), parking lot and driveway resurfacing at the Alfred barracks (\$91,650), a heat pump (\$6,500) and generator for the Pittsfield barracks (\$6,500), an update to the security system at the Bangor barracks (\$16,250), rising food service costs (\$150,000 annually) and costs related to increasing reimbursement rates for contracted cadre trainer services (\$120,000 annually).

This concludes my testimony. Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.