

TESTIMONY  
OF  
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MAINE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Before the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and  
Transportation

Hearing Date: February 25, 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 Nangle, Representative Crafts, and  
members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation. 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.

## **State Police**

The Maine State Police Program begins on page A-110. The Maine State Police provides full law enforcement services to areas that do not have organized police departments. Troopers respond to all manners of calls for service much like any other police department would. Troopers also patrol the rural roads, interstate system, and Maine Turnpike enforcing motor vehicle laws and responding to accidents. Maine State Police detectives investigate all homicides outside of Portland and Bangor as well as other major crimes. The Maine State Police operate a crime lab, computer crimes lab, and a commercial vehicle unit. They maintain the state's criminal history records and sex offender registry. They also provide many other specialized teams and law enforcement services to the State of Maine.

The first initiative transfers one State Police Lieutenant position from the Traffic Safety program, 100% Highway Fund to the State Police program, 65% General Fund and 35% Highway Fund and provides funding for related All Other costs. This position is being reassigned to supervise Troopers assigned to task force positions with MDEA, FBI Safe Streets, and the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force.

The second initiative establishes one State Police Lieutenant and one State Police Sergeant Position and provides funding for related All Other costs. These positions are needed to create the leadership structure necessary to support the transition of the Capitol Police Bureau to the Maine State Police.

The third initiative provides funding for an increase in rent for the Northern Field Troop Barracks. The Northern Field Troop has leased their current space in Ellsworth for over twenty years. The building needs substantial work and the landlord has decided to not continue the lease. The Department has been working with the Bureau of General Services on finding a new space and they have determined that a space that meets current operational needs will require this additional funding.

The fourth initiative establishes one State Police Corporal position, one State Police Lieutenant position and 3 State Police Specialist positions and provides funding for All Other related costs for additional staffing related to the Extreme Risk Protection Act. This initiative also provides funding for 5 Ford Police Interceptor Utility Hybrid vehicles for those 5 positions. These positions are necessary to fulfill the obligations of An Act to Protect Maine Communities by Enacting the Extreme Risk Protection Order Act which goes into effect on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026.

The fifth initiative establishes one Forensic Chemist II position, one DNA Forensic Analyst position and provides funding for related All Other costs, a mobile office unit and a contracted trainer for the tracking system. This initiative establishes the positions necessary for the Department of Public Safety to establish, operate, and maintain a tracking system for all completed forensic examination kits which includes an inventory of all kits as well as an annual report on the new tracking system in accordance with the Act to Establish a Statewide Sexual Assault Forensic

Examination Kit Tracking System and Conduct an Inventory of Existing Forensic Examination Kits in the Possession of Law Enforcement.

The next initiative establishes 4 State Police Detective positions and provides funding for related All Other costs. These four positions will be assigned to the Executive Protection Unit.

The seventh initiative transfers one State Police Detective position and one SBI Specialist position from the Gambling Control Board program, 100% General Fund to the State Police program, 65% General Fund and 35% Highway Fund and provides funding for All Other related costs. The Gambling Control Unit and Maine State Police agreed that these two positions are needed more urgently in the Maine State Police program and that transferring them is more appropriate to reflect the job duties now assigned to each position. With the vast majority of background checks now being processed through a contract with Gaming Integrity Services the Detective position will be reassigned to the Major Crimes Unit and the SBI Specialist will be assigned back to the State Bureau of Identification.

The final initiative for this program provides funding for the approved reorganization range change of 5 Senior Laboratory Scientist positions from range 29 to range 31 and All Other related cost. 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.

### **Turnpike Enforcement**

The Maine State Police provides full law enforcement services to areas that do not have police departments. Troopers respond to all manners of calls for service much like any other police department would. Troopers also patrol the rural roads, interstate system, and Maine Turnpike enforcing motor vehicle laws and responding to accidents. Turnpike Enforcement (Troop G) patrols the Maine Turnpike 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to ensure safety and enforce the laws of the State.

The only initiative for this program can be found on page A-112 and it establishes one State Police Sergeant position, 2 State Police Corporal positions and 4 State Police Trooper positions and provides funding for related All Other costs to increase coverage on the Maine Turnpike. This initiative also provides funding for 7 vehicles for these 7 positions. The Department of Public Safety and the Maine Turnpike Authority have a ten-year MOU in place that is based on Statute and dictates the relationship between the two parties. Over the past 5 years, there has been both an increase in calls for service and traffic volume necessitating an assessment of resources while Maine State Police and Maine Turnpike Authority were collaborating on the new MOU. These additional positions will enable Troop G to provide both patrol and proactive traffic enforcement such as impaired driving, distracted driving, and wrong way driving as agreed upon with Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA). Maine Revised Statutes, Title 23, section 1974, subsection 5 authorizes the MTA to pay for services provided by the Maine State Police in enforcing the laws of the State of Maine and the regulations of the MTA on the Turnpike.

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