

**KATHRYN SLATTERY**  
DISTRICT I

**JACQUELINE SARTORIS**  
DISTRICT II

**NEIL MCLEAN**  
DISTRICT III

**MAEGHAN MALONEY**  
DISTRICT IV



**R. CHRISTOPHER ALMY**  
DISTRICT V

**NATASHA IRVING**  
DISTRICT VI

**ROBERT GRANGER**  
DISTRICT VII

**TODD R. COLLINS**  
DISTRICT VIII

**MAINE PROSECUTORS ASSOCIATION**  
**SHIRA BURNS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**“An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government 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”**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Public Hearing Date: February 27, 2026

Testimony Neither For Nor Against LD 2212

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Shira Burns, I represent the Maine Prosecutors Association and I am submitting this testimony neither for nor against LD 2212, but to request that funding be added to the supplemental budget to meet the ongoing need of sustaining sexual assault advocates in their role through increased salaries.

A fundamental part of prosecution is to represent the State of Maine and achieve offender accountability and public safety, which includes the individual safety of crime victims. This cannot be achieved without collaboration from our community-based victim advocates, whose work directly affects criminal prosecution. Our prosecutorial response is dependent on effective victim services.

The sustainability of the work sexual assault advocates provide is an integral part of the sustainability of prosecution and the criminal justice system. Sexual assault advocates are vital to the successful prosecution of sexual abuse crimes. They serve as a conduit between the survivor and prosecution, helping keep survivors engaged in the process in a victim-centered, trauma-informed manner.

This request is to fund sexual assault services so that advocates can receive wages that are appropriate for the demanding and difficult work they do. Advocate turnover directly affects the prosecution of sexual abuse crimes and can contribute to delays in the criminal justice system. We need sexual assault advocates, and we need them to be able to remain in their positions.

For these reasons, the Maine Prosecutors Association takes neither a supportive nor an opposing position on LD 2212. Instead, we respectfully request that funding be added to the supplemental budget to meet the ongoing need of sustaining sexual assault advocates through increased salaries.

*Shira S. Burns*

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