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STATE OF MAINE
Department of Public Safety
MAINE STATE POLICE

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Testimony of Major Tyler Stevenson
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In Support of (2165)

An Act to Change Supervisory Authority over the Capitol Police.

Sponsored by Senate President Daughtry and Speaker Fecteau
Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and honorable members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

My name is Major Tyler Stevenson, and I am providing testimony on behalf of the Maine State Police and the Maine Department of Public Safety in support of LD 2165, "An Act to Change Supervisory Authority over the Capitol Police."

This bill would transfer supervision of the Capitol Police to the Chief of the State Police and reclassify the Capitol Police Chief's position to that of a State Police Lieutenant, who would serve as the commanding officer of the Capitol Police. Through natural attrition, as Capitol Police officers vacate their positions, those positions would be reclassified to State Trooper positions if funds are available.

On December 15, 2025, under the direction of Department of Public Safety Commissioner Michael Sauschuck, the State Police assigned a Lieutenant to supervise the day-to-day activities of the Capitol Police. This decision followed months of careful consideration and evaluation of all options, with the goal of providing the best possible policing and security services. The women and men of the Capitol Police are professionals who take great pride in their work, and I have been impressed with my interactions with them and my observations of their performance.

The benefits of placing the Capitol Police under the umbrella of the State Police are numerous and positive for both agencies and for the Capitol Complex. Passage of this bill would result in improved resource allocation, greater operational efficiency, and enhanced crisis response capabilities. The State Police have access to greater personnel resources, advanced technology, investigative support, and specialized units, including the Tactical Team, crowd management, K-9, bomb squad, and Major Crimes Units.

Merging Maine State Police standards with the Capitol Police would ensure uniform and consistent law enforcement standards across the Capitol Complex. Capitol Police officers would gain direct access to State Police reporting systems, technology, fleet resources, policies, and command structure. The Maine State Police also maintain

++ INTEGRITY ++ ++ FAIRNESS ++ ++ COMPASSION ++ ++ EXCELLENCE ++

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a fully functional and robust Office of Professional Standards, which ensures accountability and regular inspection of police services. Integrating the Capitol Police into this environment would extend the benefits of this oversight and support to the Capitol Complex.

The current political threat environment is higher and more dynamic than at any point this century, and it continues to evolve. As it stands, the State Police Executive Protection Unit (EPU) and the Capitol Police work well together, but they are separate organizations operating under different executive administrations. If the Maine State Police were charged with providing police and security services to the Capitol Complex, it would be natural for EPU to fall under the command of the same entity. Benefits of this alignment include improved communication, enhanced information and intelligence sharing, and consistent training, policies, and equipment.

This bill would create a critical force multiplier for the Capitol Complex. Capitol Police and EPU are currently being stretched by today's threat environment, and having troopers assigned to the Capitol Complex who possess the training, education, and experience to supplement EPU staff as needed, will be essential in addressing both current and future security concerns. A single chain of command would promote clear communication, a shared understanding of mission, and a direct flow of information from the ground level to executive leadership regarding both Capitol and gubernatorial security. In the past, these missions have at times involved duplicative objectives and strategies.

The State Police have experienced significant success in recruitment and retention over the past four years. Since 2021, we have hired 108 troopers, and we believe we can bring this success to the Capitol Police, which has historically struggled to fill its ranks. This structure would also create a more robust command framework, including the Maine State Police Major of Support Services, Lieutenant Colonel, and Colonel, under the authority of the Commissioner of the Maine Department of Public Safety.

Over the past four years, the threat environment has changed dramatically. In 2022, the Capitol Police received six complaints involving threats to the complex or legislators. That number increased to 23 in 2023, 53 in 2024, and 111 in 2025. This bill represents a necessary and proactive step toward providing the resources necessary to mitigate today's threats and prepare for those of tomorrow.

On behalf of the State Police and the Department of Public Safety, we appreciate your careful consideration of these issues. Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Respectfully,

Major Tyler Stevenson

Friendly Ammendment

LD I
2/16/07

An Act to Change Supervisory Authority over the Capitol Police

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 25 MRSA §1502, as amended by PL 2005, c. 519, Pt. Q, §1, is further amended by enacting at the end a new paragraph to read:

There is established in the Bureau of State Police one permanent State Police Lieutenant position to supervise the Bureau of Capitol Police under the direction of the Chief of the State Police.

Sec. 2. 25 MRSA §2902, sub-§8, as amended by PL 2009, c. 317, Pt. E, §6, is further amended to read:

8. Bureau of Capitol Police. The Bureau of Capitol Police, which is under the direction of the Chief of the ~~Bureau of Capitol~~ State Police. Police officers of this bureau are those appointed by the Commissioner of Public Safety pursuant to section 2908;

Sec. 3. 25 MRSA §2904, as amended by PL 2009, c. 317, Pt. E, §12, is further amended to read:

§2904. Security at capitol area and other state-controlled locations

1. Commissioner of Public Safety or designee. Except as provided in subsection 2, the Commissioner of Public Safety ~~is authorized and empowered to~~ or the commissioner's designee may adopt rules, including a schedule of parking violation fees, subject to the approval of the Governor, governing the security regarding use and occupancy of all parks, grounds, buildings and appurtenances maintained by the State at the capitol area or other state-controlled locations in Augusta. Prior to adoption of new or amended rules, the commissioner shall provide notice of rulemaking to the Legislative Council. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as described in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

2. Officials of governmental units. The officials of the governmental units listed in paragraphs A to E are authorized ~~and empowered~~ to adopt rules governing the access, use and occupancy of buildings or parts of buildings and of other public property that are under their respective supervisions. Rules adopted by the Legislative Council may include provisions governing security at legislative offices. Prior to adopting any such rule, the official shall consult with the Commissioner of Public Safety; ~~the commissioner must be given~~ and shall give the Chief of the State Police an opportunity to review the rule and to comment upon its content and

enforcement. These rules become effective upon deposit of a copy with the Secretary of State, who shall forward a copy attested under the Great Seal of the State to the District Court for Southern Kennebec. These rules are suspended to the extent necessary at any time when the Commissioner of Public Safety or the commissioner's designee determines that an emergency exists within the facilities to which they apply, except that the commissioner or the commissioner's designee may not suspend the rules governing the legislative offices without the consent of the Legislative Council. The Commissioner of Public Safety or the commissioner's designee shall enforce rules adopted pursuant to this subsection, consistent with available resources and funding.

The governmental officials authorized ~~and empowered~~ by this subsection are:

- A. The Legislative Council, for all legislative offices, including the Law and Legislative Reference Library, as established by Title 3, section 162;
- C. The State Librarian, for the State Library;
- D. The Director of the State Museum, for the State Museum; and
- E. The State Archivist, for the State Archives.

Sec. 4. 25 MRSA §2908, as repealed and replaced by PL 2009, c. 317, Pt. E, §14, is amended to read:

§2908. Police officers and state police officers; powers and duties; cooperation; assignment to Bureau of Capitol Police; absorption of Capitol Police

1. Appointment of police officers and state police officers. The ~~Commissioner of Public Safety~~ commissioner may appoint and employ police officers, subject to the Civil Service Law and, for purposes of this section, state police officers assigned pursuant to subsection 3. The specific duties and powers of police officers and state police officers appointed and employed are to patrol the public ways and parking areas, to provide security for all parks, grounds, buildings and appurtenances maintained by the State in the capitol area and other state-controlled locations designated by the commissioner and to enforce any rules adopted pursuant to this chapter. The commissioner may expand the duties and powers of police officers and state police officers in the capitol area, other state-controlled locations and public ways designated by the commissioner beyond the

duties and powers enumerated in this section to investigate, prosecute, serve process on and arrest violators of any law of this State. Police officers and state police officers may issue summons in the course of their duty to enforce this section. The commissioner may grant statewide power of enforcement of any law of this State to police officers and state police officers described in this subsection. That power may be granted only to police officers and state police officers who have completed a basic training course at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy or for whom the basic training course has been waived by the board of trustees of the academy because of equivalent training, as provided in section 2804-C, subsection 1 or 5. The commissioner shall provide forms and standard operating procedures to police officers and state police officers to carry out their functions under this section.

2. Cooperation of other law enforcement agencies. The State Police, sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, constables and municipal police officers shall, as much as possible, cooperate with the police officers appointed and employed and the state police officers assigned under this section in the enforcement of rules adopted pursuant to this chapter and any law of this State.

3. Assignment of state police officers to Bureau of Capitol Police. The commissioner may assign one or more state police officers to a command position within the Bureau of Capitol Police or any other position within the bureau, as necessary for the operation of the bureau. The Chief of the State Police shall maintain supervision and direction over any state police officer assigned to the bureau pursuant to this subsection.

4. Absorption of Capitol Police by attrition. Beginning September 1, 2026, when a Capitol Police officer position, regardless of rank, is vacated, the Chief of the State Police shall replace that position with a state police officer position, subject to the approval of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of Human Resources and the funding of the reclassification of that position. The replacement of the positions described herein will be by attrition only.

Sec. 5. Reclassification of Chief of Capitol Police position to create State Police Lieutenant position. Pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 25, section 1502, as amended by this Act, the Chief of the Bureau of Capitol Police position is reclassified to a State Police Lieutenant position.

SUMMARY

This bill transfers the supervision duties of the Chief of the Bureau of Capitol Police within the Department of Public Safety to the Chief of the State Police and replaces the position of Chief of the Bureau of Capitol Police with a State Police Lieutenant position. The bill provides rule-making authority regarding security at the capitol area to a designee of the Commissioner of Public Safety and requires that rules adopted governing security at the legislative offices and other offices within the capitol complex include consultation with both the Commissioner of Public Safety and the Chief of the State Police. The bill also requires that the Chief of the State Police replace a Capitol Police officer position that is vacated with a state police officer position, contingent upon the funding of the reclassification of that position.