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RYAN D. FECTEAU
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

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**TESTIMONY OF SPEAKER RYAN D. FECTEAU PRESENTING LD 2165, An
Act to Change Supervisory Authority over the Capitol Police**

Good morning Senator Beebee-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and esteemed members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. I am House Speaker Ryan Fecteau, and I have the privilege of representing my hometown of Biddeford.

I am here today to present LD 2165, *An Act to Change Supervisory Authority over the Capitol Police*, a governor's bill which I am happy to sponsor.

LD 2165 is an important step in merging the Capitol Police and Maine State Police, a transition that will help improve operational efficiency, manage resource allocation, and enhance crisis response capacity. Enhancing the partnership between Maine State Police and Capitol Police will strengthen existing information-sharing and create a unified command in light of increased demand for services.

Specifically, this bill will transfer supervision of the Capitol Police to the Chief of the State Police. It will 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. It allows for a gradual transition through the natural process of attrition, so that over time as Capitol officers leave their jobs, they will be replaced by a state police officer position.

The current environment is more polarized than ever, and in turn, the volume of threats directed at public officials is on the rise. I know we all feel the impact of this.. Over the past four years, the Capitol Police have seen a 180% increase in threat complaints. These complaints were largely against members of the legislature, with no regard for political affiliation or family situation. The Capitol Police have done a great job responding to the heightened demand, and I believe these changes will help us improve coordination even further, and capitalize on all of our existing resources.

Every public servant and elected official deserves to feel safe. I encourage the committee to pass this bill to help achieve this goal. I also understand that DPS has been in conversation with bargaining units and is putting forward a friendly amendment as a result of those ongoing discussions, which I will let them detail in their testimony. I am happy to answer any questions, but will mostly defer to experts from the Department who will testify after me. Thank you for your time and consideration.