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LD 573, An Act Concerning Records of the Employment of Law Enforcement Officers and Corrections Officers

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Chair Deschambault, Chair Warren, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, my name is Stephen Gorden and in addition to serving as chair of the board of commissioners for Cumberland County, I am writing today in my role as board president of the Maine County Commissioners Association. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to the Committee in support of LD 573.

About MCCA. Briefly, the Maine County Commissioners Association was founded in 1890 to assist Maine's county government in providing vital services to Maine citizens in a responsive, efficient, and credible manner. The Association is based in Augusta and currently represents 15 of Maine's 16 counties and is governed by a board with representation from each participating county.

Our position on LD 573. A key mission of counties in Maine is law enforcement and the incarceration of certain individuals in county jails. As part of this mission, elected county commissioners are charged with oversight duties in regard to county sheriffs and county jails. Given these oversight duties, it is important to MCCA that sheriff's offices and county jails have all the necessary resources to make important hiring decisions, so they can bring on the most qualified and professional law enforcement and corrections officers.

The goal of this legislation appears to be ensuring that relevant employment history records are made available to law enforcement and corrections agencies when hiring law enforcement and corrections officers. MCCA supports this goal. As we understand it, this legislation should help to ensure that our law enforcement and corrections agencies are hiring the most qualified candidates by making available to the agency all pertinent employment information for each candidate.

Conclusion. We hope this information is helpful to the Committee as it considers LD 573, and we hope the Committee will see fit to give this bill an "ought to pass" report.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Gorden". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Stephen Gorden, President

cc: Commissioner Brian Hobart, Chair, MCCA Legislative Committee
James I. Cohen, Verrill Dana, LLP, MCCA Legislative Counsel