

TESTIMONY OF DIRECTOR RICHARD R. DESJARDINS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
MAINE CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACADEMY

(In Support) L.D. 505

"An Act to Expand the Disciplinary Authority of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy"

Sponsored by: Rep. McCrea

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Hearing Date: April 16, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 436, State House

Sen Deschambault, Rep. Warren and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Richard R. Desjardins and I am the Director of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, representing the Maine Department of Public Safety.

I am here today to testify In Support to LD 505, **"An Act to Expand the Disciplinary Authority of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy"**

This amendment strikes and replaces the language of the bill. The amendment adds to the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy the duty to adopt rules for disciplinary standards of conduct that subject an applicant for a certificate or a certificate holder to disciplinary action for a violation.

The amendment authorizes the board to act against an applicant for a certificate or a certificate holder for a violation of the disciplinary standards of conduct established by the Board.

If the bill were to pass, the Academy's Board would need to proceed through formal rule making and adopt additional rules. These rules would identify conduct by law enforcement and corrections certificate holders and increase the Board's disciplinary standards of conduct for an applicant for a certificate and a certificate holder that subjects that person to disciplinary action pursuant to Title 25 MRS, section 2806-A, subsection 5, paragraph M;

It would also require agency chief administrative officers to report conduct pursuant to, Title 25 MRS, section 2807 "Reports of Conduct or Misconduct by Certificate Holder" to the Director of the Academy.

Although the Academy's Board is currently working toward rulemaking of our existing standards, this bill would further emphasize the need to codify existing and new Board standards. Clearly the additional work will impact existing Academy resources but the importance of addressing conduct by certificate holders that erode the trust and confidence of Maine's citizens in the law enforcement and corrections profession is too important to ignore.

Happy to take questions or participate in a future work session to further discuss this bill.