



David Harold McCrea

P.O. Box 513

Fort Fairfield, ME 04742

(207) 227-4903

David.McCrea@legislature.maine.gov

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION

AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002

(207) 287-1400

TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

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Representative David McCrea Introducing

**LD 505 An Act To Expand the Disciplinary Authority of the Board of Trustees of the
Maine Criminal Justice Academy.**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Good morning Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. I am Representative David McCrea and I represent the nine communities of House District 148 in the central part of Aroostook County. I am a lifelong resident of Fort Fairfield. I am here to present **LD 505 An Act To Expand the Disciplinary Authority of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy.**

First off, I want to state that I totally support officers of the law and always have. In fact, I had an uncle who served his career as a Maine State Police officer, another who spent his entire career as an officer in the Huntington Beach Police force in California and a first cousin who had a successful career with the Bangor Police Department. My whole family is very proud of all three.

The overwhelming majority of police and corrections officers are great at their very stressful jobs. However, nothing undermines the public trust that we must have in our law enforcement officers than a "bad cop". No honorable officer of the law wants these characters making their job even more difficult than it already is.

With that being said, whenever an officer seriously oversteps their authority, I believe that there are times and circumstances when they, at the very least, should seek another line of work. My concern regarding police misconduct has been growing for quite some time. Since beginning my service in the Maine House of Representatives in 2017, I have felt that perhaps there was something that I might do to help the situation. The alignment of several incidents over the past few years screamed out for our action. Some of the more recent egregious events both inside Maine and around the country have drawn a great deal of attention to the issue at hand. Several

District 148 Caswell, Easton, Fort Fairfield, Hamlin, Limestone, Presque Isle (part), Stockholm, and Cyr Plantation, plus the unorganized territory of Connor Township

articles focusing on police misconduct were published in the Bangor Daily News in 2020 which spurred me to submit this bill.

I am certainly no expert on this subject. However, I am grateful to have occasionally had breakfast with my friend and former State Senator and State Attorney General, Mike Carpenter and his longtime friend, Chief of Investigations, Brian MacMaster of the Maine Attorney General's office. Last Fall, as I was preparing my bill submissions, I contacted both Mike and Brian to discuss the subject of this bill further. We convened a Zoom meeting on December 17, 2020 to discuss the issue further. Those attending were Brian MacMaster, Michael Sauschuck, Commissioner of Criminal Justice and Public Safety, Rick Desjardins, Director of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, Marc Malon, Special Assistant to the Attorney General and me. The bill before you today is the product of that meeting and subsequent conversations with those most experienced and knowledgeable in this field.

LD 505 will give the Board of Trustees more authority to either deny or rescind the policing credentials should they determine that there is sufficient evidence, and the behavior is worthy of such action. I believe that further testimony will follow from those such experts in the field or their representatives. Thank you for hearing this very timely bill. I will be happy to field any questions that you may have of me.