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Testimony on LD 1103: “An Act To Allow a 5-year Open Enrollment in the Participating Local District Retirement Program for Certain Law Enforcement Officers, Firefighters and Other Municipal Employees”

Sen. Hickman, Rep. Sylvester, and honorable members of the Labor and Housing Committee. I’m Sen. Donna Bailey, and I represent Hollis, Limington, Old Orchard Beach, Saco, and part of Buxton.

I am here today as the sponsor of LD 1103, “An Act To Allow a 5-year Open Enrollment in the Participating Local District Retirement Program for Certain Law Enforcement Officers, Firefighters and Other Municipal Employees.”

LD 1103 would grant these municipal employees more than the current one-time option to opt in to the Participating Local District Retirement Program through MEPERS. You have heard recently from Sen. Baldacci with a similar bill that would grant this option to police officers, and LD 1103 covers a wider range of municipal employees.

Specifically, this bill would allow municipal employees to have five years to opt-in to the employee retirement system through annual open enrollment and a one-time option to opt-in after their fifth work anniversary.

This simple change to statute would provide peace of mind and appreciation for our municipal employees that work hard for our cities and towns every day. Currently, municipal employees only have one time to opt-in to their retirement program, and that is usually right at the beginning of their employment, when some may not be in the position to make that decision.

LD 1103 would incentivize employees to stay longer at their jobs, knowing they can benefit from the retirement program, and giving them several options to take part in it would show the desire to invest in these employees’ futures from the State.

Thank you for your time, and I’m happy to answer any questions you may have.