

Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association (MMA)

In Opposition to
LD 949, *An Act to Protect Workers from Employer Surveillance*

April 4, 2023

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder and members of the Labor and Housing Committee. My name is Kate Dufour, and I am submitting testimony in opposition to LD 949 on behalf of the 70 municipal leaders elected by their peers to serve on the Association's Legislative Policy Committee and directed to establish positions on bills of municipal interest.

While the bill provides exceptions to the general prohibition of employer surveillance activities, it is unclear whether the provision, which reads "...if it is strictly necessary to ensure employee health and safety or the security of employer data" is broad enough to address the surveillance tools used by municipal employers, such as GPS technology, the body cameras worn by law enforcement officials, and computer log-in functions.

In many cases, the technology and equipment used at the local level ensures the proper investment of limited property taxpayer resources, keeps residents, business owners and guests safe, and in some instances, such as monitoring the amount of salt applied to roads during winter storm events, protects the environment as well. Additionally, programs used to track and prevent access to certain websites have played an important role in mitigating the adverse impacts of cyber-attacks.

While all employees are certainly entitled to privacy in their homes and automobiles, when perform job related functions there is a time and a place for surveillance and employers should retain the right to do so as determined warranted.

Thank you for considering the municipal perspective. If you have any questions about the Association's position, please do not hesitate to contact me at either 1-800-452-8786 or kduofur@memun.org