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Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government:

An Act To Create Greater Accountability in the Office of County Sheriff LD# 375

My name is Jeffrey Kerr and I'm from the County Seat of Franklin County which is Farmington. I start my testimony today with a question: would you go to work knowing that you were going to be abused or harassed?

When the sheriff of a county takes the law into his/her own hands they are basically called a bully.

Every four years people are elected for jobs mainly on the merit of trust. When this trust is broken, what are the people to do and who do they turn to for help?

Usually when someone breaks the law they end up in trouble. If I run a red light I am going to get a fine, right? I have to answer to someone. The sheriff also should have to answer to someone. So the question is who. Who is it that can hold the sheriff accountable? According to how the law reads now, it is not the county commissioners job to hold him/her accountable because they are an elected official. Some sheriffs do take advantage of the law and the fact that they don't have to answer to anyone like you or I do is not right! It does not seem fair that a sheriff would above the law.

This is why this bill is so important. There has to be someone who they answer to besides the Maine Criminal State Academy board in Waterville, or the governor of this fine state. A sheriff is a hard job, filled with honor and respect and most importantly the trust of the people. Like we all know, once trust is broken, it sure is hard to get back. Now saying that I have one more question, I ask you again, would you go to work knowing you were going to be harassed but you needed a paycheck to feed your kids? This action is just wrong and should not be accepted by anyone any more! I would ask this committee to stop this action from happening ever again.

Please vote in favor of LD# 375.

Thank you for your time and I take any questions know you might have

Sincerely
Jeffrey Kerr