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Testimony by State Senator Ben Chipman Presenting LD 1123
An Act To Authorize a Memorial to the Victims of COVID-19.
Presented to the Joint Standing Committee on
State and Local Government
April 23, 2021

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

My name is Ben Chipman. I am the State Senator for Senate District 27, representing part of Portland. I am pleased to present LD 1123, *An Act To Authorize a Memorial to the Victims of COVID-19.*

COVID-19 has upended our daily lives in ways we could have never imagined just two years ago. Our essential workers have had to work around the clock and put themselves at risk to help others. Grandparents have not been able to see their grandchildren for a year and half, missing out on important milestones. Parents have had to grapple with the challenges of remote school for their kids. Because of this deadly virus, so many people have experienced incredible hardship, isolation, and unfortunately, loss, in the past year.

We need to honor the people who died after becoming infected with COVID-19. As of April 20, 767 people in Maine have died from the virus.ⁱ This once in a generation pandemic needs to be properly recognized in the State of Maine. That's why I'm recommending we create a memorial to the victims of COVID-19.

I'd like to amend LD 1123 to add that Legislative Council be tasked with funding and carrying out the construction of the memorial on State House grounds.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions.

ⁱ <https://www.wmtw.com/article/maine-cdc-reports-420-additional-covid-19-cases-no-new-deaths/36173631#>