



60 Community Drive | Augusta, ME 04330-9486

1-800-452-8786 (in state)
(T) 207-623-8428
(F) 207-624-0129

Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association

In Support For

LD 1409- *An Act to Require Reimbursement When a Municipality Hires First Responders Whose Training Costs Were Incurred by Another Municipality*

April 25, 2023

Sen. Nangle, Rep. Stover, and distinguished members of the State and Local Government Committee, my name is Rebecca Graham, and I am submitting testimony in support for LD 1409, *An Act to Require Reimbursement When a Municipality Hires First Responders Whose Training Costs Were Incurred by Another Municipality*, on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association, which represents the interests of municipal government before the Legislature. The positions of the Association are established by our 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC), who are elected by the councils and selectboards of municipalities in each of Maine's 35 Senate districts.

Municipal officials appreciate this bill proposal as they struggle to backfill vacancies for these vital positions across all communities. A similar bill forms part of MMA's platform this session as it pertains to emergency service dispatchers and communication officers. To that end, we asked Rep. Faye if she would consider adding this position to her bill and she agreed.

One of the issues this bill may have unlike the current reimbursement process for law enforcement officers is the multiple credentials each of these first responders receive from multiple different training providers, travel costs, and what each service might calculate for these costs. With regard to public safety communications training, MMA has conducted an initial review of what agencies are requiring at the base level and has conducted a survey on the average costs for training.

Consistent training across all surveyed agencies:

Certified Terminal Operator Metro/NCIC Emergency Telecommunicators Course, Emergency Medical Dispatcher, Emergency Fire Dispatcher, NextGen 911 Certification, Maine EMD License, Certified Terminal Operator, CPR, Notary, (EMD, EFD, ETC, ProQA, CTO, NG911, OUTEC, FEMA Training, NCMEC, METRO/NICIC)

Average training time all certifications and on the job training (OTJ):

4- 6 months before they can be moderately unsupervised.

Average Cost of Training:

\$15,000-\$20,000

(Average salary for the 18 weeks of training was reported around \$16,650 with another \$13,536 for Field Training Officer salary, \$280 for Metro Class, Average Meal & Mileage \$200 x 6 trips to Maine Criminal Justice Academy)

With regard to EMS and Fire Services, it is important that costs assumed by part-time or rural agencies with per diem and volunteer provision, these communities may have varying costs but significant lose out when a volunteer provider is hired by a full-time agency even when that agency further enhances their training. Their initial experience and certification are not replaced for that volunteer agency and if a consistent level of expenditure could be prorated, those initial training costs could be returned to those communities not only to benefit additional replacement costs, but also to enhance the training provided to volunteers who will never leave that level of service, but may be able to enhance their own training for the benefit of their community.

Officials believe that this reciprocity between communities will help not only stem the bleed of stealing finite employees from each other, but also honor those costs in communities that are unlike to be a full-time level service, though still need individuals to aid them addressing public safety threats provided on shoestring budget.

To that end, the Association is happy to assist the committee as it explores this option to arrive at a median farm number that can be prorated based on costs at each level of basic training for these needed employees and that desired credentials each service needs.

Rebecca Graham
Maine Municipal Association
LD 1409

(I endeavor to be in person but have conflicting need in two other committees so I am
opting to send this in advance, in case I cannot be in the room.)