

**Testimony of Kirsten LC Figueroa, Commissioner
Department of Administrative and Financial Services**

**Before the Joint Standing Committee on
Transportation**

**“An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures
of State Government, Highway Fund and Other Funds and Changing Certain
Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State
Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2021, June 30, 2022
and June 30, 2023”**

March 25, 2021

Good afternoon Senator Diamond, Representative Martin and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation. My name is Kirsten Figueroa, and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services. I am here today to testify in support of the fiscal year 2022-2023 biennial budget bill for the Highway Fund, LD 161.

As Governor Mills said, at a time when Maine people are hurting, when small businesses are struggling to keep their doors open, when the ranks of the unemployed have swelled, and when we are fighting a deadly virus all around us, we are proposing balanced budgets as required by the Constitution that continue efficiencies, good fiscal management and curtailments to cover projected revenue shortfalls for all three fiscal years. They focus on combatting the COVID-19 pandemic by continuing to rebuild the State’s public health infrastructure and protecting essential health care, education, and life-saving services. They do not change Maine tax rates and they maintain the Budget Stabilization Fund. With a future made unpredictable due to the ongoing pandemic, these budgets make good on the promise of government, which is to protect and support the wellbeing of our people and institutions.

Budget – Bureau of the (0055)

The first program on **page A-3** of the budget document is the Bureau of the Budget, which manages all aspects of the state budget on behalf of the Governor.

The State Budget Officer and her staff are responsible for: supporting the Governor in the submission of budget documents to the Legislature; managing the annual Work Program; budget and position analysis and control; and, revenue forecasting.

There are 13 positions within the Bureau of the Budget: 12 are funded by the General Fund and 1 by the Highway Fund. The Highway Fund allocation for Fiscal Year 2022 is \$128,183 and the allocation for Fiscal Year 2023 is \$128,781. This allocation provides funding for the one Highway Fund position and just under \$9,000 in All Other for operating expenses.

There are no new initiatives in this program.

Buildings and Grounds Operations (0080)

The next program on **page A-4** is the Buildings and Grounds Operations program. This Program provides funds for care and maintenance of state facilities.

The Highway Fund allocation of approximately \$1.9 million in each year provides for the staff that perform the custodial and maintenance duties, as well as for the cost of materials and other repairs to the buildings. This allocation provides funds for maintenance of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, as well as the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and State Police complex on Hospital Street.

There is one new initiative in this program reducing funding on a one-time basis in 2022 and 2023 to account for projected savings in fuel and electricity costs, as well as deferring planned maintenance of buildings and grounds. The initiative reduces funding by \$67,673 in each fiscal year.

State Claims Commission (0097)

On **page A-5** is the baseline budget for the State Claims Commission. The Commission works to assure that the rights of property owners and other interested parties are protected, and that just compensation is awarded for highway condemnations of property by the State. The Commission provides an impartial board to hear cases presented by the property owners, without their having to retain professional counsel.

The Commission is overseen by DAFS, which also provides the Commission's administrative support. The Personal Services allocation supports one part-time staffer for the Commission and the per diem expenses of the Commission members. The All Other allocation provides for the general expenses of the Commission.

There are no proposed changes to this Program.

On **page A-6** is the baseline for the **Departments and Agencies-Statewide** program. The program has no allocation – which is correct.

Revenue Services – Bureau of (0002)

Moving on to **page A-7**, the next program is the Bureau of Revenue Services, also known as Maine Revenue Services or MRS. MRS serves the citizens of Maine by administering the tax laws of the State effectively and professionally while simultaneously collecting the revenues necessary to support Maine government. MRS collects approximately \$4 billion in annual revenue for the General Fund and more than half a billion dollars in Highway Fund and Other Special Revenue. The allocation in this program supports one full headcount and portions of eight other MRS positions.

There are no new initiatives in this program.

This concludes my testimony on the DAFS portions of the 2022-2023 Highway Fund budget. Thank you. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.