

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

**Before the Joint Standing Committees on
Appropriations and Financial Affairs
and State & Local Government**

**“An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of
State Government, General 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 3, 2021

Good afternoon Senator Breen, Representative Pierce, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs; Senator Baldacci, Representative Matlack and members of the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government. 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, LD 221, specifically those items on today’s agenda relating to the Executive Department.

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.

Executive Department

Administration – Executive – Governor’s Office

We start on **page A-198** of the budget bill with the **Administration – Executive – Governor’s Office** Program.

This program provides funding for support staff and related All Other to the Governor as she carries out the responsibilities of the Chief Executive. This support includes correspondence, policy development, legislative relations, national and regional Governor's associations scheduling, preparation of reports and addresses, public information, executive appointments, case work, department coordination, and managing the operating budget of the Governor. There are no new initiatives in this Program.

Blaine House

Next is **page A-199**. The **Blaine House**, a National Historic Landmark, is the official residence of the Governor. The Blaine House staff provides services for the Governor, the Governor's family and guests, maintains House offices for the Governor, displays the mansion during public visiting hours, and assists at official receptions and other gatherings. The Governor is responsible for the operation of the building and general maintenance of its interior. The Bureau of General Services maintains the grounds, service buildings and exterior of the mansion. There are no new initiatives in this Program.

Office of Policy Innovation and the Future

Finally, the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) can be found on **page A-201**. The Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future was created in 2019 by Governor Mills to address important long-term issues facing Maine, by engaging state agencies, stakeholders and the public in the planning and implementation of innovative, data-driven policy solutions. GOPIF's current policy focus areas include: climate and energy policy, including the Maine Climate Council and coordination of the state's new four-year action plan "Maine Won't Wait"; opioid response, prevention and coordination of the "Maine Opioid Crisis Strategic Action Plan"; staff leadership for the Governor's Children's Cabinet and the Early Childhood Advisory Council; and support for other key economic innovation and workforce development initiatives, as needed. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the office continues to provide policy, communications and technology support to the Governor and several state efforts, and the office staffed the Governor's Economic Recovery Committee. There are no new initiatives in this Program.

This concludes my testimony for today. Thank you. I am happy to take any questions you may have.