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Department of Public Safety  
Maine State Police  
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Augusta, Maine  
04333-0020

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Testimony of Lieutenant Michael Johnston  
Maine State Police

**In Opposition of (LD 1278)**

An Act to End the Maine Information and Analysis Center  
Program

Sponsored by Representative Warren  
Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee

Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren and other distinguished members of the joint standing committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Lieutenant Michael Johnston and I am here to represent the Maine State Police and the Maine Department of Public Safety to testify in opposition of LD 1278, “**An Act to End the Maine Information and Analysis Center Program**”.

You have previously heard from Commissioner Sauschuck on the importance of MIAC’s role and its function as an analytical hub for information sharing and analysis on a variety of threats and crimes.

The MIAC functions to support all law enforcement agencies by providing analytical support for major or complex criminal investigations. This support frees law enforcement agencies and investigators to focus on the investigative efforts while MIAC staff perform analytical and research functions. Only five or six police departments in Maine are large enough to hire and support their own analyst. MIAC not only works closely with those agencies but provides a centralized resource with statewide jurisdiction and capacity to support the remaining agencies who cannot. There are over 160 state, local and county law enforcement agencies in Maine and only one entity, the MIAC, that brings all of them together by collaborating the sharing of information between all of them and with our federal partners.

A question often posed to the MIAC and law enforcement in general is how you judge your effectiveness. Often this is difficult to quantify because the MIAC is just one spoke in the wheel of the overall process. However, as recently as last week MIAC was called upon to assist

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in the efforts to locate a sixteen-year-old girl who left her residence bound for New York with a convicted child sex offender. The MIAC immediately began to coordinate the exchange of information with their counterparts in New York to assist investigators in Maine to help provide a clear threat picture. As a result of MIAC assisting with both the research and sharing of information, law enforcement was freed up to focus on investigator efforts. Less than twenty-four hours after she left her residence, bound for New York, the conclusion all of us hoped for was achieved and the process of reuniting her with her family began. The MIAC was part of the overall process to help bring about a successful resolution to this critically important investigation

I have included additional examples as an attachment to this testimony where the MIAC assisted our partners through analysis, information sharing, research and facilitating an increase in collaboration and communication.

All the critical work done in the MIAC occurs under a framework consisting of multiple layers of oversight, review and regulation to ensure that while protecting Maine people and the institutions in our communities we are at the same time observing their privacy, civil rights and civil liberties. When it comes to matters of privacy the question of how we do things can be as important as what we do. To help answer that question and provide information on our processes I have included a graphic as an attachment to this testimony that gives an overview of the information flow process in the MIAC

Finally, we ask that as you listen to the testimony today you consider what is right for Maine and the people who live and work here. Ask yourself whether Maine people are better served when law enforcement and the private sector are less informed and communicate less. The Department of Public Safety and Maine State Police are committed to continued engagement, outreach and discussion on this very important issue. On behalf of the State Police and the Department of Public Safety we appreciate your careful consideration of these issues. Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Respectfully,  
*Lt. Michael P. Johnston*  
Lieutenant Michael Johnston

## ATTACHMENT A

- The MIAC assisted law enforcement and government officials with planning, preparation and response plans for our State and its Capital area in the events leading up to the Presidential Inauguration. And provided accurate information on tips and leads related to possible domestic terrorism and criminal activity. The MIAC was able to vet and dispel threats to provide a clear threat picture for law enforcement and public safety officials;
- The MIAC assisted a local law enforcement agency with the theft of two cell phones valued around \$2,300 from a local retail store. MIAC issued a situational awareness bulletin on this crime and as a result of the information sharing were contacted by several other police departments that had similar cases. As a result of the information sharing and coordination, they were able to compare notes, identify and charge a suspect with numerous felony thefts;
- The MIAC issued an officer safety bulletin on a subject with extensive criminal history to include criminal threatening, terrorizing and refusing to submit to arrest or detention after the subject threatened to shoot and kill law enforcement if he should encounter them;
- The MIAC provided analytical assistance and information sharing on a subject who posted videos shooting firearms and threatening to go to a local Wal-Mart. Information was initially reported to another states' fusion center who in turn shared information with us and local enforcement. Subject was determined to be a felon who should not be in possession of firearms. Local law enforcement coordinated with federal authorities to investigate and arrest the offender. This occurred on the heels of an August 3, 2019 shooting at a Wal-Mart in Texas where twenty people were killed;
- The MIAC provided analytical assistance to a local police department regarding a YouTube video posted online where a woman expressed suicidal thoughts. We were able to assist in the location of that female and police conducted a welfare check and were able to bring her in for an evaluation;
- MIAC analysts have provided real time analytical support on human trafficking enforcement details and investigations with local law enforcement agencies.
- The MIAC issued an attempt to locate bulletin on a suspect attempting to lure young girls into his vehicle in Hancock and Penobscot County. The suspect was subsequently arrested by Bangor PD for assault and unlawful sexual touching;
- The MIAC assisted State Police and federal law enforcement with the apprehension of a subject wanted as a fugitive from justice for robbery;
- The MIAC assisted a state law enforcement agency with an identity theft case. While the information initially pointed to a suspect engaged in criminal activity, we assisted the investigating agency in determining that he was the victim of identity theft and his information was being used for illicit purposes. As a result the agency was ultimately able to get him successfully entered in the NCIC identity theft file and put him on the right road to rebuilding his credit and clearing his name of the wrongdoing of others;
- The MIAC has fostered a partnership to facilitate collaboration between public health and public safety entities, to support evidence-based strategies for response, treatment,

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recovery and substance abuse prevention; to include the sharing of data and to facilitate the exchange of information received through laboratory testing of substances and the sharing of this information with the public health field to provide for better planning, education, and the potential of new, more volatile substances, being distributed in communities throughout Maine;

- The MIAC provides a monthly compilation of intelligence bulletins to local and county emergency management directors regarding critical-infrastructure protection, homeland security, critical infrastructure, cyber security, public health, and/or election security;
- Individuals contemplating criminal activity will often engage in observed behaviors reasonably indicative of crime, many times posting this on online via various social media platforms for the public to see. When these behaviors are reported from the community or members of the public in the form of suspicious activity or tips and leads, they must be properly analyzed and shared when appropriate. Often, individual pieces of standalone information may seem relatively benign, but when brought together with other relevant information by a trained analyst it paints a much clearer picture of a criminal intent. As a project of its National Threat Assessment Center, the U.S. Secret Service analyzed 67 plots to commit school shootings that were averted, and it found that in 63 of those plots — 94 percent — the students had shared their plans with someone, and nearly half had documented their ideas in writing or online.

# Tips, Leads, and Suspicious Incident Workflow



Government Agencies  
Police  
Law Enforcement  
Federal  
Citizens  
Private Sector

## Tips and Leads Data To MIAC

Analyst Reviews Information

Query Databases

Query Other Departments

Analyze and Interpret Possible Conclusions

Further Investigation by Requester/Receiver Leads to:

No Action Taken  
Information Retained

Open Case

Disseminate as Appropriate

Analyst ensures information is in accordance with MIAC privacy policy

## Refining Process

Tips and leads come into MIAC from many sources. e.g email, phone, online tip, open source.

Tips and leads data is refined using internal and external sources. Analysis is performed at every level

Tips and leads data is available for review and feedback given

Tips and leads data is reviewed, categorized, and disseminated appropriately

Relevant information is shared with fusion centers and ISE

Fusion Centers  
Information Sharing Environment (ISE)