



LEIGH INGALLS SAUFLEY
CHIEF JUSTICE

STATE OF MAINE
SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT

March 15, 2016

The Honorable David C. Burns, Chair
The Honorable Barry J. Hobbins, Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
State House, Room 438
Augusta, Maine 04333

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Dear Senator Burns, Representative Hobbins, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary:

Pending before you is L.D. 1639. Among the proposals contained in the bill is a provision that would shift the cost of Bail Commissioners from individuals charged with a crime to the Judicial Branch. The Branch has estimated the cost of that proposal at roughly \$1.5 million dollars. Those funds are not currently available within the Judicial Branch and would need to be allocated from the General Fund in order for the proposal to be effectuated.

Recognizing the need for change in the bail process and the Bail Commissioner system, and understanding that the cost estimates and the logistics of such a change would benefit from further review, I propose to create a Working Group to address the challenges of the current bail system. I would anticipate that the Working Group will begin its review this spring.

I would be pleased to share the results and any proposals from that Working Group with the 128th Maine Legislature as soon as they are available.

As always, it is an honor to work collaboratively with the Legislative Branch.

Sincerely,



Leigh I Saufley
Chief Justice

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