**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: May 1st, 2023 CONTACT: Paul Gaspar (207) 767-2558; admin@maineassociationofpolice.com

**New poll shows broad public support of local law enforcement in Maine.**

*The Fall 2022 Critical Insights survey finds that 84% of Mainers have a positive view of law enforcement.*

**Attached is the summary of findings of the Critical Insights survey.**

**Augusta, MAINE** – The Maine Law Enforcement Coalition (MLEC) is pleased to share the results of a new poll that finds a large majority of Mainers hold a positive view of law enforcement in the State of Maine.

The survey included 620 respondents from across the state over the phone and online. All survey respondents were registered voters who live in Maine. The results show that 84% of Mainers have an overall positive view of law enforcement.

Additionally, over three quarters (77%) of surveyed voters believe law enforcement contributes to the moderate to high levels of safety in Maine, and a total of ninety two percent (92%) of voters in Maine believe the state’s shortage of law enforcement officers should be a priority for lawmakers.

This indicates overall broad public support of Maine’s law enforcement community and shows that Maine people know law enforcement is a major factor in keeping their communities safe.

“A supermajority of Mainers say they have full faith in their local law enforcement officers,” said Kevin Anderson of the Maine Law Enforcement Association (MSLEA), “This shows that we have earned the trust of the communities in which our members are active. Maine law enforcement professionals should be proud that the Maine people have their back.”

“When just under 100 percent of voters are saying the legislature should be focusing on the law enforcement shortage here in Maine and more than half are saying it should be a major priority, our elected officials should be listening, said Joel Wilkinson of the Maine Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). “Lawmakers ought to be proposing ways in which we can recruit and encourage Mainers to enter a law enforcement profession.”

“We are proud that the people of Maine are able to separate their opinions about the national conversations surrounding policing from their own experiences with local, Maine law enforcement,” added Paul Gaspar of the Maine Association of Police (MAP). “It shows that they truly represent MAINE’S experience with the high caliber of men and women serving their communities, and NOT the national or political party narratives or representations used to engender dangerous and unnecessary policy.”

“This poll is a true representation of how Maine citizens view our Law Enforcement Officers,” said Joe Bureau, President of the Maine State Troopers Association.  “Maine Troopers alongside all of Maine Law Enforcement Officers rely on community support to be successful in our public safety mission.  We need the same from our lawmakers as we receive from our citizens to collectively meet the challenges we are faced with daily.  Staffing shortages and initiatives to address these needs have to continue to be a priority."

**About the Maine Law Enforcement Coalition (MLEC):** MLEC is made up of the below four labor unions representing a wide variety of Maine law enforcement professionals.

***The Maine State Law Enforcement Association (MSLEA)*** *acts as the bargaining agent for member agencies in the state of Maine Law Enforcement Bargaining Unit. MSLEA has a 16 member, all-volunteer, Board of Directors and Officers and approximately 400 officers from 12 state law enforcement groups including: Attorney General Detective; Adult Probation Officer; Capitol Police Officer; Department of Corrections Investigator; Game Warden; Fire Investigator; Forest Ranger; Juvenile Community Corrections Officer; Marine Patrol Officer; Motor Vehicle Detective; Military Security Police; and Judicial Marshals. The primary mission of MSLEA is to protect and preserve the collective bargaining rights, job related civil liberties and labor destiny of Association membership, to ensure fair and equitable treatment of the MSLEA membership in matters arising from administrative investigations and employment related disciplinary actions. Additional responsibilities are to draft and support legislation to benefit State law enforcement and member agencies, to anticipate trends and develop training opportunities to ensure that the State’s law enforcement agencies have the faith of the people they serve through ethical conduct commensurate with the Code of Ethics for modern law enforcement officers.*

**1 of 2**

***The Maine Association of Police (MAP)*** *MAP was established in 1975 by a small group of local police associations. The mission of this group of individual associations was to self-govern and on the local and state level, advocate for the safety and working conditions of Maine full time municipal police officers and public safety dispatchers. MAP now represents 47 local associations in their respective municipalities spanning a membership of approximately 950 members in addition to a dedicated association of law enforcement retirees. MAP works cooperatively with our municipalities to represent our members in many facets of their profession, including collective bargaining, legal and legislative representation, and training in state, as well as federal labor law. It has, and will continue to be, our goal to work proactively and professionally in forwarding the cause of our members and the protection of the citizens and communities they serve.*

***The Maine State Troopers Association (MSTA)*** *was established in 1971 and since then has been the sole registered bargaining agent for its members. Any sworn member of the Maine State Police below the rank of lieutenant can be a member. MSTA currently has 250 members comprised of Troopers, Corporals, Sergeants, Detectives, Polygraph Examiners, Pilots, and Specialists. The purpose for which this Association is formed is the following: 1) To represent and act as bargaining agent in matters of wages, hours and other working conditions and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection of and for the members of the Maine State Troopers Association; 2) To promote and develop a friendly and fraternal spirit among all of the members of the Bureau of State Police (hereinafter called the “State Police”); 3) To mitigate the hazards of our work; 4)To preserve and foster good will with the citizens of and all people in the State of Maine and to encourage cooperative understandings and agreements with all organizations, agencies and officers of the government concerned with the State Police in the State of Maine for the mutual benefit of its members and the improvement of the public service.*

***The Maine Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP)*** *proudly represents over 850 sworn municipal and county law enforcement officers from York County to Aroostook County. Our primary role is to provide professional labor services regarding negotiating collective bargaining agreements and providing legal support for its members. We are committed to improving the safety and working conditions of law enforcement officers and the profession through all legal and ethical means in an effort to further build upon the confidence of the public in the service dedicated to the protection of life and property. We are part of the National Fraternal Order of Police which represents more than 330,000 sworn law enforcement officers across the country in more than 2,200 lodges.*

###

**2 of 2**