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January 20, 2012

Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee

LD 1744 An Act to require Carbon Monoxide Detectors in Additional Residential Facilities

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The Maine Fire Chiefs are in support of LD 1744 "An Act to require Carbon Monoxide Detectors in Additional Residential Facilities".

Carbon Monoxide has become a silent killer of people across our nation. Such a simple and cheap device could be the difference between someone going to bed or taking a nap and not waking up or someone being alerted to a warning of carbon monoxide in their room.

On average, about 170 people in the United States die every year from CO produced by non-automotive consumer products. These products include malfunctioning fuel-burning



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appliances such as furnaces, ranges, water heaters and room heaters; engine-powered equipment such as portable generators; fireplaces; and charcoal that is burned in homes and other enclosed areas. In 2005 alone, CPSC staff is aware of at least 94 generator-related CO poisoning deaths. Forty-seven of these deaths were known to have occurred during power outages due to severe weather, including Hurricane Katrina. Still others die from CO produced by non-consumer products, such as cars left running in attached garages. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that several thousand people go to hospital emergency rooms every year to be treated for CO poisoning.

In 2008, the state of Maine average 150 people seen in emergency departments for CO poisoning and 1-5 deaths that were related to Carbon Monoxide. This statistical data was retrieved from the Maine Public Health Blog.

As advocates of Public Safety, we feel this is a proper and legitimate correction to a growing problem in our country, state and local communities. Please feel free to contact us for any additional support, help or means to improve the safety of our citizens.