Out of Abundance of Caution, Governor Mills Activates Maine National Guard; Places Them on Standby to Support Law Enforcement If Needed

January 15, 2021

Governor Janet Mills announced today that she has activated the Maine National Guard and placed them on standby status to support law enforcement, if needed, in advance of potential events at the State Capitol heading into this weekend and next week. The Governor activated the Guard out of an abundance of caution to ensure that Guard members are ready and available to assist law enforcement, if it is determined their support is needed.

As of now, the Department of Public Safety, as a result of national reports, is specifically tracking and preparing for any potential events in Augusta on Sunday, January 17th through Wednesday, January 20th, the date of the Inauguration. At this point, there is no credible evidence to suggest any potential safety or security threats.

> *"There is no credible evidence at the moment to suggest that any protests that may occur in Augusta will be anything other than peaceful. But based on what we saw last week at the U.S. Capitol, and like many of my fellow governors across the country, I am activating the National Guard out of an abundance of caution. Doing so allows them to be ready to act in the event their support is needed,"* ***said Governor Janet Mills****. "I fully respect the right of all Maine people to speak their minds in a peaceful and lawful manner, and I hope – and expect – that will be the case in the coming days, just as it has been in the past here in Maine."*

The Maine Department of Public Safety, through the Maine State Police and its Maine Information Analysis Center (MIAC), continues to monitor intelligence and receive and analyze any relevant and credible information from the public and Federal partners in order to maintain situational awareness and plan for potential events in Maine.

> *"The Department of Public Safety is working closely with both our Federal and local partners to ensure that any demonstrations that take place are conducted lawfully and peacefully,"* ***said Mike Sauschuck, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Public Safety****. "We are planning so that we are fully prepared if that is not the case, although there is no evidence right now that suggests this."*

The Department, in conjunction with Capitol Police and local law enforcement such as the Augusta Police Department and other surrounding departments, has stood up a unified command center led by the Maine State Police to prepare for and respond to any potential events. The Maine National Guard are engaged in these discussions.

In response to the events of last week in Washington, D.C. and future potential events, the Capitol Police, with the support of the Maine State Police, has increased its presence in and around the Capitol. The Capitol has been closed to the public as a result of COVID-19 and is only accessible to lawmakers, state government employees, or others with authorized key cards. However, the Capitol Police have further consolidated entrance points at the State Capitol and the adjacent Cross Office Building and have established additional security screening procedures. In the coming days, the Department of Public Safety will continue to adjust protocols as needed. As a reminder, weapons are prohibited on state property in Augusta.

Earlier this week, the Governor also authorized a request from the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to send Maine National Guard service members to support federal agencies and the District of Columbia National Guard during the Inauguration.

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