

Senate Judiciary Committee

Pete Mulvey 271-4063

CACR 8, relating to sheriffs. Providing that no person shall hold the office of county sheriff after he or she has attained the age of seventy-five years.

Hearing Date: March 4, 2025

Time Opened: 2:13 p.m.

Time Closed: 2:19 p.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Gannon, Abbas, Carson and Reardon

Members of the Committee Absent : Senator Altschiller

Bill Analysis: This constitutional amendment concurrent resolution raises the retirement age for sheriffs to 75 years of age.

Sponsors:

Sen. Abbas

Rep. Doucette

Rep. D. Mannion

Rep. Osborne

Who supports the bill: Five individuals signed in support. Contact Pete Mulvey (peter.mulvey@gc.nh.gov) for further details.

Who opposes the bill: two individuals signed in opposition. Contact Pete Mulvey (peter.mulvey@gc.nh.gov) for further details.

Who is neutral on the bill: N/A

Summary of testimony:

Senator Daryl Abbas

Senate District 22

- Sen. Abbas emphasized that the role of Sheriff was an elected position.
- Election to Sheriff was not a lifetime appointment, therefore if someone was unable to do their job, voters would appropriately decide.
- There was a fiscal benefit to retaining Sheriffs beyond the age of 70.
- Sen. Abbas noted the recruitment and retention problems which faced law enforcement agencies statewide and discouraged disqualifying otherwise qualified experts.

Chuck Massahos

Rockingham County Sheriff

- Sheriff Massahos spoke in support of CACR8.
- Age should never be a barrier to serve in the community, especially for sheriffs, who were entrusted with maintaining safety and peace.
- Leadership was about vision, communication, and decision making under pressure.
- The life expectancy of NH citizens was much shorter when the current age limit was imposed.
- Citizens should not be restricted by arbitrary age limits.
- Sheriffs were held accountable every election cycle
- Sheriff Massahos emphasized a focus on qualifications, commitment and experience.

Sheriff Bill Wright

Belknap County Sheriff

- Sheriff Wright was the youngest sheriff in the State upon his election.
- The current age limit was set in 1792.
- Sheriffs were appointed by courts in 1792 and were not publicly elected.

PM

Date Hearing Report completed: March 7, 2025