



Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

November 8, 2023

Members of the Independent Commission to Investigate the Facts of the Tragedy in Lewiston:

On behalf of the people of Maine, we thank you for accepting this important appointment and its serious responsibilities.

Maine is on what will be a long and difficult road to healing. As we have said, a cornerstone of our ability to heal as a people and as a state is to know the truth – in this case, the full and unvarnished facts of what happened on October 25th, the months that led up to it, and the law enforcement response to it.

We have selected you for the Independent Commission because each of you brings a wealth of personal and professional legal, behavioral, investigatory, or other experiences that will help bring to light these facts for all to know and understand. Additionally, each of you is highly respected for your abilities, your expertise, your impartiality, your integrity, and your fair-mindedness. These qualities, and your experiences, will be fundamental to the discharge of the Independent Commission's duties.

We must recognize that, from what we know thus far, on multiple occasions over the last ten months, concerns about Robert Card's mental health and his behavior were brought to the attention of his Army Reserve Unit, as well as law enforcement agencies here in Maine and in New York. This raises crucial questions about actions taken and what more could have been done to prevent this tragedy from occurring.

In order to exercise your independence as a Commission, you should determine the full and complete scope of your work, and you should ask any question necessary of any person that is relevant to your charge in gathering the facts. All that we ask is that you follow the facts, wherever they may lead, and that you do so in an independent and objective manner, biased by no one and guided only by the pursuit of truth.

To that end, we should not – and we will not – presume to know the full extent of the staff and resources you may require to discharge your fact-finding responsibilities fully and properly. The Office of the Attorney General is providing funding for the Independent Commission. However, if the Independent Commission determines that it needs additional funding or additional investigatory power to discharge its fact-finding responsibilities fully and properly, then our Offices stand ready to seek any appropriate authorization from the Legislature on your behalf.



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Lastly, we encourage the Independent Commission to conduct its work in public to the greatest extent possible, insofar as it does not limit or hinder the ability of the Independent Commission to uncover the facts, and that the Independent Commission conduct its work with a due sense of urgency, guided by, above all else, the pursuit of facts and the necessary time that may take. Ultimately, we ask that the Independent Commission prepare a formal report discussing the results of the investigation to be released to the public.

As we have said, the complete facts and circumstances – including any failures or omissions – must be brought to light and known by all. The families of the victims, those who were injured, and the people of Maine and the nation deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,



Janet T. Mills
Governor



Aaron M. Frey
Attorney General



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