

To: Senator Beebe-Center and Honorable members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee.

Re: Testimony on behalf of LD 178

March 13th, 2023

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee,

My name is Alexsea Cholewa and I am a resident of the Southern Maine Women's Reentry Center. I am currently a full-time college student at UMA. I participate in several educational opportunities that are led by incarcerated individuals. These people have given me hope and motivation to use my time in prison to better myself and prepare for reentry. I am a recovery coach within the facility and also, a mentor for the community around me. I am writing to you today to show my absolute support for LD 178 and the effort to Re-establish parole in Maine.

I support this bill because I believe that restorative justice can and will work. Maine taxpayers spend a substantial amount of money housing inmates. Many of the inmates being housed would be great candidates for reentering and reintegrating back into the community. The tax dollars that are spent on housing incarcerated people who have spent many years working towards rehabilitation. Maine has the opportunity to pass LD 178 and move forward into a brighter future while keeping our communities safe.

Thank you for your work and for considering my opinion. I hope I can count on your support for LD 178

Respectfully, Alexea Cholewa