

Karen Matsueda  
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LD 178

I urge you to pass the LD 178 “Act to Support Reentry and Reintegration into the Community”. The state of Maine in so many ways is a model for in the US for progressive and restorative criminal justice, including its innovative Earned Living Unit. The next logical step is to restore hope and healing for both the community and for incarcerated people who have worked hard to build a new, generative life even while behind bars.

As a woman of faith, I believe deeply in the power of redemption, reconciliation, and reentry into the larger community even after having done great harm. Without any hope, we are literally sapping the life out of the incarcerated individuals who keenly want to work for restoration and redemption, and we are robbing the broader community of the gifts and contributions that they can make. Warehousing people in prisons does not accomplish lasting public safety and vitality. Furthering Maine’s commitment to investing in restoration through thoughtful parole will reap an enormous harvest of thriving individuals and communities.

Sincerely, Karen Matsueda