



MAINE
Unitarian Universalist
State Advocacy Network

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

My name is Naneen Chace-Ortiz, I live in Westbrook, and I speak on behalf of the Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network (MUUSAN). We support LD 178 from a faith tradition that affirms the inherent worth and dignity of every person and seeks justice, equity and compassion in human relations, making no exception for those who have violated the law.

We are encouraged by the strong support behind this bill, particularly the positive recommendation by the Legislature's Commission to Examine Reestablishing Parole. The Maine Recovery Advocacy Project, Parole-4-Maine and other respected community organizations that support LD 178 have offered compelling statistics and other evidence showing that parole makes sense from an economic perspective and is consistent with public safety objectives. We add our voice to say that parole makes sense as a moral proposition.

Activated by the principles of our faith, MUUSAN believes in prioritizing redemption, rehabilitation and restoration of the individual offender as quickly as feasible to where they can contribute constructively as members of our communities. Inflexible extended separation from society without an opportunity for consideration of individual circumstances serves no purpose other than retribution. LD 178, by contrast, is a step toward a safer, more just, welcoming, and sustainable world for all of us.

I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on this bill to ensure that parole returns to Maine. Thank you.

Naneen Chace-Ortiz, MSN, RN.