



Good morning. Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety: my name is Adam Zuckerman and I am the lobbyist for the Maine People's Alliance. Our 32,000 members stretch from Kittery to Fort Kent.

MPA supports LD 178, an Act to Support Reentry and Reintegration into the Community. In theory, Maine's criminal justice system has many goals. They include retribution, rehabilitation, and re-entry. All are important in their own right. However, our myopic focus on retribution at the cost of all else poisons our efforts at rehabilitation and re-entry.

Parole incentivizes rehabilitation and improves re-entry. Almost a quarter of people in Maine prisons have sentences in excess of ten years. Even if people have proven that they are ready to go home, Maine is one of the only states without a process to review their sentences and transition them back to the community with supervision. Allowing rehabilitated Mainers to transition home to complete their sentences while working and caring for their families helps us all. Parole provides opportunities to contribute to the community and promotes rehabilitation. In contrast, lingering in prison after rehabilitation makes re-entry nearly impossible.

LD 178 has broad bipartisan support because regardless of our political party, we can all agree that all Mainers deserve, hope, healing, and rehabilitation. Giving Mainers a second chance is not just the right thing to do—it is the smart thing to do. When we abolished parole in 1976 it did not make us any safer—it just made us poorer. We spend \$76,000 a year for every person we incarcerate. That costs nine times more than supervising them on parole. For every hundred Mainers we grant parole, it would boost our economy by \$14.7 million.¹

I urge you to vote to pass LD 178 and reinstate parole in Maine. Thank you.

¹Colby Laboratory for Economic Studies. "Rethinking Parole in Maine: Considering Economic Contributions of Parolees in the Context of Recent Trends in Maine's Labor Force." 27 November 2022. <https://legislature.maine.gov/doc/9484>