

Testimony of Jared Pinkham - Co-Director of Missing In ME

LD 838 An Act to Identify the State's Unidentified Human Remains

Dear members of the committee,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for LD 838, An Act to Identify the State's Unidentified Human Remains. This bill has the potential to be a landmark piece of legislation, not only for our state but for the country as a whole.

As a resident of Maine and Co-Director of the nonprofit Missing In ME, I am deeply troubled by the fact that the state still has human remains dating back to the 70's and 80's that have yet to be identified. The issue of unidentified human remains is not just a matter of statistics or bureaucratic inefficiency. It is a deeply personal issue that affects the lives of families and loved ones of the deceased. By failing to identify these remains, we are denying these families closure and peace of mind, and perpetuating a cycle of trauma and grief that can last for generations.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the state of Maine has over 135 missing people and 30 unidentified human remains. Even the Medical Examiner's Office believes there is crossover and that some of our missing people could be in this unidentified category.

However, with new advances in forensic genealogy technology, we finally have the opportunity to solve these cases and provide answers to the families and loved ones of the deceased. The DNADoe Project and Dave Mittelman the CEO of Othram have provided invaluable public testimony in support of this bill, highlighting the importance of using advanced DNA technologies and forensic genealogy services to identify the remains of the unidentified individuals in Maine. Their expertise and support will be instrumental in the success of this bill and the identification of these individuals.

I believe that this bill has the potential to serve as a model for other states to follow. By demonstrating the importance of identifying unidentified remains and the positive

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LD 838 An Act to Identify the State's Unidentified Human Remains impacts that such action can have on communities, we can inspire other states to take similar action and help to create a national movement around this issue.

In conclusion, I urge you to support LD 838 and to take bold action to address the issue of unidentified human remains in Maine. By doing so, we can make a meaningful impact on the lives of countless families and communities, and pave the way for positive change across the country.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

Jared Pinkham