

James Waite
OLD ORCHARD BEACH
LD 1771

I'm writing in support of LD 1771, "An Act Regarding Speedy Trials."

Article I, Section 6 of the Maine Constitution states that the accused shall have a right to a speedy trial, yet Maine law doesn't define what constitutes a speedy trial. This bill rectifies that by establishing time limits for the commencement of a defendant's criminal trial and provides remedies for when the time limits have been violated.

I have a friend who was arrested and charged with a Class D crime in August of 2021 and his trial won't happen until August of 2023 at the earliest. I find this totally unacceptable and this bill would remedy this going forward. My friend has been living his life in a state of limbo for 21 months, he turned down an excellent job offer just because he has this trial hanging over his head, and in my opinion his conditions of release violate his civil liberties. By making a person wait for trial like this, the process becomes part of the punishment, a punishment that is unwarranted, especially if the accused is found not guilty at trial.

I urge the committee to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1771.

Sincerely, James M Waite
Old Orchard Beach