

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Alexis Leet and I'm a local resident in Lewiston and a student. As someone who's had a parent in a prison in Maine who was using a public defender, I would want him and everyone else to get a fair trial and not someone who can't give them their all. I'm writing to you because I feel that public defenders are overworked and should have more funds. Public defenders are so overworked that they can't do they're job the right way. In Maine we also don't have enough public defenders so they're so overwhelmed with cases they have to do the bare minimum in their cases and they're cases can be misrepresented.

Some people are being held in jails for days, weeks, or even months because they lack public defenders. This is a violation of the 6th Amendment which states a speedy trial with an impartial jury. And a lawyer will be appointed to you if you can't afford one. I know that the Maines Commission On Indigent Legal Services wants the budget doubled which would allow 10 public defenders, 1 supervising district devender, 1 office manager, and more. I truly believe that with that funding the public defenders wouldn't be so overwhelmed with cases they could do they're job to their full ability. This is why I believe they should get more funds. No one fully thinks about needing the funding or doesn't think it's important until they're in trouble and need a public defender . Thank you so much for your time.

Sincerely,

Alexis Leet