

Sarah Johnson
Sanford
LD 2214

2/24/24

RE: LD 2214 An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025

Honorable Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,

My name is Sarah Johnson and I live in Sanford. I support more tax dollar expenditures on programs promoting public health and community support.

We need youth services programs so that children are not being sent to Long Creek because we have no place else for them to go for help.

We need community support programs in housing, transportation, and substance use disorder to welcome those transitioning out of prisons and jails. This will ensure their path is to family, community, and work, and not back into the carceral system. There are currently unfunded mandates from DOC and legislature for programs like MAT that strain jail budgets. These and other opioid and detox programs should be at medical rehabilitation centers, not in our prisons and jails. Jail staff are not trained medical professionals, and they do not deserve the stress of trying to be.

There are excellent examples of some of these approaches in legislation such as LD 1514 and LD 288. We have the funds to support these public health initiatives, and I believe we have community populations ready to enthusiastically participate. I certainly am.

I hope you will consider targeting funding at harm reduction, youth services and community support for those transitioning out of our prisons and jails.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sarah Johnson
Sanford Maine