



MAINE ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYERS

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February 4, 2025

Senator Anne Beebe-Center, Chair
Representative Travis Hasenfus, Chair
Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
100 State House Station, Room 436
Augusta, ME 04330

RE: LD 244 – An Act to Provide Safe, Short-term Housing to Indigent Individuals Recently Released from Correctional Facilities

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and Members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety,

MACDL supports LD 244, *An Act to Provide Safe, Short-term Housing to Indigent Individuals Recently Released from Correctional Facilities*.

LD 244 addresses a critical issue in our criminal justice system by ensuring that individuals reentering society have access to stable housing at their most vulnerable time.

Too often, individuals released from correctional facilities face insurmountable challenges when trying to reintegrate into their communities. After having spent time in correctional facilities, individuals often lose whatever housing options were available to them. Without stable housing at the time of reentry to society, people are far more likely to return to the criminal justice system, perpetuating a cycle of incarceration that is both costly for Maine's taxpayers and ineffective. By providing short-term housing, LD 244 will offer individuals the stability they need to find employment, reconnect with family, and access essential support services.

LD 244 is fiscally responsible. Preventing homelessness for those recently released from correctional facilities will lead to lower incarceration rates, reduce recidivism, decrease reliance on emergency services, and increase public safety. Investing in transitional housing is cost-effective compared to the expenditures associated with the cycle of incarceration.

For these reasons, MACDL urges you and your colleagues to support LD 244 and take a meaningful step toward criminal justice reform that prioritizes rehabilitation and successful reentry to society after incarceration.

Sincerely,

Eric S. Thistle, Esq.
MACDL Member