

Testimony in support of LD 405
the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
March 24, 2025

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and distinguished members of the Committee:

My name is Sarah Johnson and I am a resident of Sanford.

I am writing in support of LD 405, An Act to Define "Solitary Confinement" for the Laws Governing Jails and Correctional Facilities.

Maine should have one definition of "Solitary Confinement" for clarity, consistency and for the protection of both incarcerated individuals and the employees of Maine's jails and correctional facilities. The definition stated in LD 405 is in line with the [United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners \(the Nelson Mandela Rules\)](#). This is a universally acknowledged standard for prison management.

Maine statutes all start with definitions so that laws can be clearly defined, upheld and monitored when applied. This is also the case in Maine Department of Corrections policies. Clear and consistent policies provide stability and avoid confusion and unease that could make the prison environment unstable for both incarcerated individuals and staff. This consistency would be applied throughout the Department of Corrections offering equity to everyone regardless of their location.

Defining "Solitary Confinement" will make all our communities safer, which is a core goal in the Maine Department of Corrections Mission Statement.

I hope you will support this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sarah Johnson
Sanford, Maine.

https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Nelson_Mandela_Rules-E-ebook.pdf