

**Testimony in support of LD 647**  
**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 647, An Act Regarding Telephone and Video Call Access in Detention and Correctional Facilities and Jails

I would like to thank all the cosponsors of LD 647 for this supportive and restorative bill.

There is an abundance of data describing the benefits of maintaining family ties and communication for an incarcerated individual and their family. Many are cited in this [Prison Policy Initiative research report: The positive impacts of family contact for incarcerated people and their families](https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2021/12/21/family_contact/).

The article states “In particular, children — the “hidden victims” of incarceration — are at increased risk for mental health problems and substance use disorders, and face [worse intellectual outcomes](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229644128_Children's_Family_Environments_and_Intellectual_Outcomes_During_Maternal_Incarceration) compared to children without an incarcerated family member. Supportive family relationships can promote psychological and physiological health for incarcerated people and their loved ones, at a time when everyone’s health is otherwise deteriorating. Serving families at this most critical period simply makes communities healthier. “ These benefits also translate into a safer environment in the detention and correctional facilities and jails, which benefits all staff and allows for more programming.

LD 647 makes our entire Maine community safer, and supports families in their most stressful times.

I hope you will support this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sarah Johnson  
Sanford, Maine.

[https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2021/12/21/family\\_contact/](https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2021/12/21/family_contact/)

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