



## Testimony in Favor of LD 740

### An Act to Establish a Comprehensive Program to Divert Youth from the Criminal Justice System and Address Their Needs

Chairmen Beebe-Center and Tavis Hasenfus, and members of the Joint Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety,

My name is Dorothy Odell and I live in Belfast. I am here to represent the Restorative Justice Project Maine and urge your support LD 740. I have been a volunteer with this organization for over fifteen years, and am a previous board member, and currently serving on the Legislative committee.

Restorative Justice is an alternative to incarceration which seeks to repair the actual harm caused by wrongdoing, addresses the needs of those who have been harmed and those who have caused harm, and seeks to prevent subsequent harmful acts. RJPM is a mid-coast non-profit organization that has, for over fifteen years, provided an alternative to the criminal justice system and the all too familiar pipeline that leads ultimately to incarceration.

As members of this Committee you know all too well the cost of detention, roughly the same as the salary of a teacher or mental health professional. Please support LD 740 and keep our costs down and our youth in the community where they can learn to become responsible members of the actual community rather than locked up in an artificial society of other similarly unfortunate youth.

Dorothy Odell  
Restorative Justice Project Maine  
LD 740

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