



## MAINE ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYERS

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### 2024-2025 OFFICERS

March 31, 2025

*President*  
Jeremy Pratt

Senator Anne Carney - Chair  
Representative Any Kuhn - Chair  
Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety  
100 State House Station Room 438  
Augusta, ME 04330

*President-Elect*  
Matthew D. Morgan

*Vice President*  
Sarah E. Branch

RE: LD 1189: An Act to Prohibit Arrest and Detention for Civil Violations and Require an Attorney for the State to Determine Whether to Charge a Class E Offense as a Civil Violation

*Secretary*  
Luke Rioux

*Treasurer*  
Justin Andrus

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

### 2024-2025 DIRECTORS

MACDL supports LD 1189.

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As this Committee is well aware, there exists a crisis in Maine's Criminal Justice system. There is a backlog of cases awaiting trial, there are individuals incarcerated without attorneys, and there are individuals in the community who have no attorney but are constitutionally entitled to one. There are too many cases and not enough attorneys.

The purpose of this bill is to reduce the number of Class E charges and to convert some of them to civil violations. If the purpose of this bill comes to fruition it should free up lawyers to handle other cases and it should reduce the number of individuals who are currently unrepresented.

According to Judicial Branch data there were approximately 14,793 Class E charges brought forward in calendar year 2024. This is a shockingly high number that uses up limited valuable resources.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Tina Heather Nadeau

Class E crimes are the lowest level of crime that an individual can be charged with but an individual charged with a Class E crime has the exact same constitutional rights as someone charged with a serious violent felony.

Passage of this bill should free up valuable resources that are desperately needed for far more serious crimes.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee on this very important topic.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jeremy Pratt, Esq.,  
President, MACDL