

Maine PRISONER ADVOCACY Coalition



April 4, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Jan Collins, I am Assistant Director of Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition (MPAC) an organization committed to ethical, positive, and humane changes in Maine's prison system.

I am writing in support of 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 and am hopeful that practice will create positive change in our system.

Some districts and county sheriff's are already doing what this bill will put into statute. A summons is issued instead of booking someone into jail for non-violent crimes that do not threaten the communities safety.

Where this is practiced, the results are promising. Fewer people waiting in jail for trial. More people able to maintain there employment, pay their bills, hold there families together.

In addition, there are less costs to taxpayers for unnecessary jail stays. Jails are safer. With the current staffing shortage for corrections officers in jails and prisons, finding ways to keep people out of jail while keeping communities safe is better for everyone.

Thank-you for your support.

With appreciation,

Jan Collins