



TESTIMONY OF ALICIA REA, ESQ.
LD 1204 – Ought to Pass

**An Act to Support Direct Access Worker Employment by
Removing Certain Employment Disqualifications**

Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage,
Insurance & Financial Services

PO Box 7860
Portland, ME 04112

(207) 774-5444
ACLUMaine.org
@ACLUMaine

April 15, 2025

Senator Bailey, Representative Gramlich and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, greetings. My name is Alicia Rea, and I am a policy fellow for the American Civil Liberties Union of Maine, a statewide organization committed to advancing and preserving civil liberties guaranteed by the Maine and U.S. Constitutions through advocacy, education, and litigation. On behalf of our members, we urge you to support LD 1204.

The ACLU of Maine has advocated to limit the collateral consequences of criminal convictions in the Legislature for many years. Collateral consequences are legal and regulatory restrictions that bar people convicted of crimes from accessing rights, benefits, and opportunities, even long after they've served their time. These are consequences that were not included in a court's sentencing order but nevertheless punish people with criminal convictions after they have served their sentence, such as limitations on individuals' ability to pursue employment, housing, and education.

This bill removes aggravated cultivating of marijuana as a disqualifying offense that prohibits an individual's employment as a direct access worker for a personal care agency. Given the workforce shortages in direct care services, removing this barrier for those who were convicted of this particular nonviolent crime will give those who have already served their sentence the opportunity to re-enter the direct care workforce.

We urge you to vote that LD 1204 ought to pass.