



April 15, 2025

*Testimony Regarding LD1416: An Act to Require the Department of Health and Human Services to Immediately Take Custody of Persons Sentenced to Mental Health Facilities That May Not Include County or Regional Jails*

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

My name is Jeff Matranga, and I am writing in my capacity as the President of The Maine Psychological Association (MePA). MePA is a non-profit association which represents the 600+ psychologists and psychological examiners in Maine. Our mission is to advance psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare. Our membership consists of practicing psychologists, academicians, students, retirees, associates and affiliates.

We are writing to urge you to support LD1416, which prohibits the Commissioner of Health and Human Services from placing defendants committed to mental health institutions in county or regional jails.

Defendants accused of crimes who are in need of mental health treatment require specialized treatment that is simply unavailable in jail facilities. This would include individuals who are experiencing active and severe psychotic symptoms who need ongoing medication management and monitoring.

For this reason, we encourage each member of this Committee to vote Ought to Pass on this piece of legislation, which will give defendants access to the mental health resources that they need to understand and respond to the charges against them.

Respectfully,

Jeff Matranga, President