



Preble Street

Turning Hunger and Homelessness into Opportunity and Hope

April 14th, 2025

Florence House

Huston Commons

Logan Place

Anti-Trafficking Services

Healing Center

Veterans Housing Services

Rapid Re-Housing

Emergency Food Programs

Teen Center

Joe Kreisler Teen Shelter

First Place

Street Outreach Collaborative

Advocacy

Maine Hunger Initiative

Health Services

MMC-Preble Street

Learning Collaborative

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Executive Director

Good afternoon Senator Carney and Representative Kuhn and other members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Hailey Virusso, and I serve as the Director of Anti-Trafficking Services at Preble Street; I am submitting testimony on behalf of Preble Street, a statewide social work agency providing accessible barrier-free services to empower people experiencing problems with homelessness, housing, hunger and poverty. Preble Street's Anti-Trafficking program was established in 2013 and has served roughly 1,000 survivors of both labor and sex trafficking throughout the state of Maine.

Preble Street supports LD 1427, An Act Extending the Statute of Limitations on Criminal Actions Involving Aggravated Sex Trafficking.

The healing journey of survivors of trafficking is rarely a linear process. Survivors of trafficking are robbed of their autonomy and freedom, and both need and deserve the opportunity to heal through time, community, connection, and survivor-centered services that are guided by their wants and needs for their life. During the healing process, some survivors may decide that they would like to pursue action through the criminal legal system – but a key component of that decision stems from safety and security. This process can often take years.

By extending the statute of limitations, we are creating more moments where survivors have the choice and agency to make decisions that align what they want for their lives. Restoring the right of choice is paramount in healing. Survivors deserve to move at their own pace, especially when it comes to sharing their story and experience with law enforcement. Trafficking investigations often require a great deal from survivors, a network of support is needed to ensure they have appropriate avenues to seek help in throughout the process. Extending the time that a survivor has to share their experience and seek help through the criminal legal system signifies to survivors that we respect their journey and will honor their decisions – including when, or if, they choose to move forward.

For these reasons, we support LD 1427 and urge you to vote ought to pass.

Thank you for your consideration.

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