



Maine Chiefs of Police Association
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Statement in opposition to

L.D. 648, An Act to Expand the Supervised Community Confinement Program

Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

April 23, 2025

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and honorable members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. My name is Jason Moen. I am Chief of the Auburn Police Department, and President of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association. I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association in opposition to LD 648.

The mission of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association is to secure a closer official and personal relationship among Maine Police Officials; to secure a unity of action in law enforcement matters; to enhance the standards of police personnel, police training and police professionalism generally; to devise ways and means for equality of law enforcement throughout the state of Maine; to advance the prevention and detection of crime; to prescribe to the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics; and to promote the profession of law enforcement as an integral and dedicated force in today's society sworn to the protection of life and property.

A prisoner is eligible for Maine's current supervised community confinement program if the prisoner has served at least 2/3 of the sentence if the sentence is longer than 5 years or at least 1/2 of the sentence if it is less than 5 years. In the case of a split sentence, other factors are considered, including the length of the unsuspended portion of the sentence. Finally, the prisoner must have less than 2 years remaining in a sentence to be considered for supervised release, and if a prisoner has a custody classification level greater than the minimum sentence, they may not participate in the program.

This bill loosens those eligibility requirements for supervised community confinement. As proposed in LD 648, the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections may transfer a prisoner to supervised community confinement without meeting the eligibility requirements listed above if the prisoner has served at least 15 years of a sentence of at least 15 years in length,

was under the age of 26 years when the crimes were committed, and has continuously maintained a certain custody classification for the 5 years preceding the prisoner's consideration for the supervised community confinement program.

Maine's current supervised community confinement program is based on well-established safety protocols. Eligibility criteria reflect that a prisoner should serve a significant portion of their sentence, particularly for serious and violent crimes, before being considered for supervised release. It is set up in this manner because accountability for one's actions matters regardless of the offender's age. This bill sidesteps this law by allowing a prisoner to be released well before most of their sentence has been served based on their age.

If a defendant who is 24 years of age at the time they committed a crime were given preference to participate in a supervised community release program over a defendant who committed the same crime at age 26, it sends the message that the crime committed by the younger individual was less severe. There is no difference as to the impact on the victim. There is no difference as to the risk they pose to the public. Treating these individuals differently based on age undermines the core principle of justice in that the same crimes should impose similar consequences and the same eligibility requirements for any community release program.

For these reasons, the Maine Chiefs of Police Association asks that the committee oppose the passage of this legislation and vote ought not to pass on LD 648.