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**Testimony in opposition to LD 1536  
to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety**

April 23, 2025

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and distinguished members of the Committee:

My name is Peter Lehman and I live in Thomaston. I am a formerly incarcerated citizen and a person in long-term recovery.\* I am testifying in opposition to LD 1536 on behalf of the Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition whose goal is to promote restorative practices in order to increase public safety and the health of our community.

This bill seeks to reverse the changes made in the Bail Code in 2021 after input from multiple stakeholders.

We are not aware of any negative consequences of those changes and many positive ones. There is no need for this bill except diversion from the serious business of this Legislative session.

As the Criminal Law Advisory Committee points out, “considerations such as health care needs, caretaking responsibilities, and maintaining employment (which would be eliminated by Section 5) are factors that can relate an individual’s likelihood of abiding with conditions, refraining from new criminal conduct, and appearing as required, as well as to public safety, and are thus appropriate for consideration when setting bail.”

Moreover, “elimination of the language regarding inability to pay the bail commissioner’s fee (Section 1) could result in some people remaining in custody. CLAC members also noted that restoring the provision that defendants report to their counsel as a condition of bail (Section 3) has the potential to create ethical conflicts for defense counsel.”

We urge you to unanimously defeat LD 1536.

I will be happy to try to answer any questions.

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\* In the interest of honesty and disclosure, a personal background statement is available on request.