

This is my written testimony in support of bill LD 1684.

My name is Holly Williams, I live in Levant, Maine and am testifying in favor of LD 1684 (An Act to Exclude from Eligibility for a Community Confinement Monitoring Program a Person Serving a Sentence for Certain Domestic Violence Crimes).

Our family friend, Virginia Cookson, age 39, mother of a teenage daughter, was murdered on September 25th, 2024 by her ex-boyfriend, Richard Keith Thorpe. Thorpe had previously been sentenced to 5 years in prison for domestic violence aggravated assault and began that sentence in January of 2021. He had been released into the "Supervised Community Confinement Program" on February 13th of 2024. He started dating Virginia shortly after release into the "supervised" program until July 2—yet moved in with Virginia in May. He was virtually a free man...who then murdered Virginia a few months later.

People convicted of Felony A & B domestic violence charges should NOT be granted the privilege of early release from jail or prison. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 76% of women and 56% of men are murdered by someone they know. Typically in both intimate and familial relationships, when the perpetrators are released from jail or prison, they know where to find their victim. These are not just random drive-by shootings, these are personal and intentional murders.

It's well-known that the legal and justice system is understaffed, so any kind of "supervised community confinement program" is a lie. Supervision is the act of overseeing someone, to guide them or correct them when they're wrong. Thorpe had severely limited Virginia's contact with the outside world before she broke up with him. Was he being supervised then?

Please support LD 1684 and let's prevent the murder of at least one person. Let's not allow one more child to have to bury their parent due to domestic violence.