



MAINE ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYERS

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May 19, 2025

Senator Anne Beebe-Center, Chair
Representative Tavis Hasenfus, Chair
Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
5 State House Station, Room 436
Augusta, ME 04333

RE: LD 1979: Resolve, Directing the Department of Corrections to Convene a Working Group to Examine the Establishment of a Program to Award Earned Time Credit for Educational Achievement to Persons Who Are Incarcerated

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and Members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

The Maine Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers is a non-profit organization that has nearly 300 member attorneys who practice criminal defense across the state. Since 1992, MACDL has advocated for its members and the people we are fortunate to represent in courtrooms throughout Maine and at the State House.

MACDL presents this testimony in **support** of LD 1979.

Incarcerated people who undertake education during the period of their incarceration should be recognized and rewarded for doing so. Their commitment to their rehabilitation and personal advancement should be rewarded with earned time credits, as their self-improvement no doubt will benefit both them and their communities going forward.

If this Committee believes that a working group is necessary to decide what should be a clear decision, then that working group should be convened post-haste.

Excessive incarceration of people who have rehabilitated themselves is both wasteful and cruel. The Department of Corrections should be encouraging its incarcerated residents in pursuing education—granting earned time credits for such dedication would be an important step towards the successful transition of these folks back into their communities.

We urge this Committee to vote **ought to pass** on LD 1979.

Thank you for your consideration, for your attention to this important matter, and for allowing me to present this testimony to you all today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tina H. Nadeau". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Tina H. Nadeau, Esq.
MACDL Executive Director