

Lynn Tillotson
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LD 1805

Public Statement from Visit Portland in Support of LD 1805

As the CEO of Visit Portland, I am writing to express my strong support for L.D. 1805, “An Act to Establish a Post-conviction Review Process for Crimes Committed by Victims of Sex Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation.”

As a representative of the tourism and hospitality industry in Portland, I see firsthand the incredible potential of our workforce and the power of second chances. This bill represents a critical step forward for Maine, not only in addressing the systemic injustices faced by victims of sex trafficking and exploitation but also in unlocking the untapped potential of individuals who, if given the opportunity, can contribute meaningfully to our communities and economy.

L.D. 1805 would establish a post-conviction review process for those whose criminal records are the direct result of their victimization in sex trafficking and exploitation. This is not only an act of justice but a critical workforce issue.

Many individuals affected by trafficking and exploitation are eager to rebuild their lives. However, criminal records often serve as a barrier to employment, particularly in industries like hospitality, tourism, and retail, which are cornerstones of Maine’s economy.

By allowing these individuals to clear their records of convictions tied to their victimization, this bill would open doors to stable employment, enabling them to contribute to our workforce and achieve financial independence.

Like many regions, Maine faces persistent workforce challenges, particularly in the hospitality and tourism sectors. L.D. 1805 offers a pathway for individuals to reintegrate into the workforce, helping to fill critical gaps in industries that rely on a diverse and resilient labor pool.

At Visit Portland, we strive to promote Maine as a welcoming and inclusive destination. Supporting L.D. 1805 aligns with these values by ensuring that survivors have a fair shot at employment and success, free from the stigma of unjust criminal records.

By passing L.D. 1805, we would be sending a clear message: Maine stands with survivors. We recognize their potential and are committed to supporting their reintegration into our workforce. This will not only benefit the individuals directly impacted but will also strengthen our community.

I urge this committee to support L.D. 1805. This bill is not just about criminal justice reform—it is about economic opportunity, workforce development, and the kind of state we want to be.

Sincerely,
Lynn Tillotson
President & CEO, Visit Portland