

Janet Drew
York
LD 1911

Testimony in support of LD 1911 and 1941 to the Committee On Judiciary
January 8, 2026.

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee On Judiciary,

I'm Janet Drew, a retired nurse, and I ask you to support LD 1911 (clean slate) and LD 1941 (parole). These bills offer our fellow Mainers opportunities for successful & productive reintegration in the community.

Clean Slate seeks to limit public access to prior records to reduce stigma. Both bills offer second chances for too many mothers, fathers, siblings, friends and neighbors in prison too long.

Parole's abolition in 1976, and Maine's unconstitutional indigent defense today, has exploded our prison numbers. But most victims and public, while prioritizing safety, now believe people deserve a second chance and the ACLU reports that beyond 10yrs, incarceration does not add to rehabilitation. 95% of people incarcerated eventually are released, often unprepared for life on the outside. Parole offers hope for earned redemption, and for planned, supported, safe and DOC-supervised community reintegration.

Some Mainers do view punishment as just desserts, and it's true that these are complex issues. But Maine's sentences are harshest, tragic harms & deaths occur, and both National and State data show system bias. People inside are disproportionately poor, uninsured, sick, mentally ill, unhoused, single moms, people of color, and immigrants. COs and no-one is educationally prepared or adequately staffed to safely manage this mix...

We need to use many strategies to accelerate healing and second chances, for families and whole communities.

With a robust process of earned parole through accountability and redemption, folks are DOC-supervised and supported through sentence completion.

With a functional process to shield online records from public access, released Mainers can more easily obtain employment and housing, and successfully reintegrate in the community.

support community safety and the second chance that these 3 bills offer.