Testimony in support of LD 1911 to the Committee On Judiciary

January 8, 2026

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

My name is Sarah Johnson and I reside in Sanford. I am writing in support of LD 1911, An Act to Automatically Seal Criminal History Record Information for Certain Crimes.

I have a friend in his 50s whom I trust completely. He raised a family, built a solid career, and has always been a respected and generous member of his community. In his 40s, he made a mistake that led to incarceration. While incarcerated, he worked every job available, volunteered, and participated in every program offered. He served his sentence with dignity, integrity, and a model conduct record.

Upon release, however, he faced years of discrimination from employers and landlords because of his record. To those who know him, he is kind, honest, dependable, and compassionate. A true friend who has come to my rescue countless times. To many who didn't know him, he was simply labeled "a felon." He was denied housing, exploited by employers who knew his options were limited, and forced to move when landlords discovered his past. Because of public access to his criminal record, he continued to be punished long after his sentence ended.

After years of barriers, he secured partial funding for professional certification, borrowed the rest, graduated at the top of his class, and was immediately hired by an employer who values him. Still, he lost years of opportunity, Maine lost tax revenue, and our community lost the benefit of his full contributions.

We either believe in second chances or we do not. When someone takes responsibility, serves their sentence, and proves their character, they should be allowed to reenter society with fair opportunities. I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1911.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Sarah Johnson