

Harbor Therapy Services
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January 5, 2026

My name is John Barczak and I am sharing my story in support of LD 1941. I was incarcerated in 1987 after a horrific crime that I deeply regret and for which I served 33 years. During my time in prison, I earned an Associate's Degree and almost a Bachelor's Degree in both Legal Studies and Business Management. Some classes were not available to me at Maine State Prison at the time, and that was the barrier to degree completion. Additionally, I worked as a paralegal after being trained by another resident and learned about investment management through my own studies. I earned time off my sentence and was approved for community confinement and released from prison in 2022, which allowed me to re-enter the community with monitoring and support before my initial sentence was completed.

Upon release, I worked with a probation officer and a mental health counselor that I knew from the prison to satisfy 2 years and 10 months of probation, which included processing a long prison sentence, acclimating to community life after a lengthy prison term, skill building and job training. In that time, I earned a Class A CDL and now drive a truck for a local and reputable trucking company, a job I've held for over 3 years. I've maintained a rented home in a desirable neighborhood, I utilize the local community gym for my fitness needs, I volunteer in the community to help those in need and I have hobbies that I love such as gourmet cooking, and landscaping. To a casual observer, I am just a community member. And in reality, I AM a community member now. In looking back, I feel I was ready to be a part of the community roughly 20 years after I was initially incarcerated.

I agree, there is no magic number of years a person should serve to be ready to rejoin the community.....that is best left to a committee whose job it is to monitor the progress of each incarcerated individual and to see the changes that signal readiness for re-entry. I have acquaintances who have died in prison without ever having a chance to have a life outside of prison and that is a waste of resources and possibility. Thank you for considering the real life benefits of parole for the State of Maine.

John Barczak

Rockland

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