

January 8, 2026

Good morning Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and esteemed members of the Maine Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

I write to you in support of **LD 1911: An Act to Automatically Seal Criminal History Record
Information for Certain Crimes**

I am the founder and coordinator of ShelfLife Project, a distribution program that for the past five years has supplied books and other educational resources to Maine correctional facilities.

Since 2018 I have also served as a volunteer Special Projects Coordinator with the Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition bringing films, performers, artists, and workshops inside to residents of the Maine Department of Corrections.

In my time engaging with formerly incarcerated individuals who have served their sentenced time and reentered society I have heard a litany of stories about how their past records have created barriers to move on with their lives. Many have been turned down for jobs, housing, or other opportunities that often trap them in a cycle of dependence and financial instability. Often, these men and women have completed job-training or career-oriented programs while incarcerated and are eager to apply their new skills to support themselves, dependent children, and aging parents and to contrite back to society as tax-paying citizens.

The stigma and specter of a served sentence should not continue to hinder individuals once they have demonstrated successful reentry and the ability to avoid reoffending. Sealing records for certain crimes will help clear the path to personal independence and and successful reintegration.

I urge this committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD1911

My thanks for your time and consideration,
Jon Courtney
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