

Testimony in support of LD 1916, 1917, 1918 and 1919 to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

January 12, 2026

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and distinguished members of the Committee:

My name is Sarah Johnson, and I am a Sanford resident writing in support of:

LD 1916 An Act to Automatically Seal Criminal History Record Information for Class D and Class E Crimes Relating to Marijuana Possession and Cultivation

LD 1917 An Act to Allow the Sealing of Criminal History Record Information Related to Convictions for Conduct That Is No Longer a Crime in the State

LD 1918 An Act to Clarify the Criminal History Record Information Act with Respect to Criminal Charges Dismissed as the Result of a Plea Agreement

LD 1919 An Act to Expand the Types of Convictions Eligible for Sealing Through a Post-judgment Motion to Seal Criminal History Record Information

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 1916, 1917, 1918, and 1919.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sarah Johnson, Sanford