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Greetings Judiciary Colleagues:

I write today in support of devising a system to bring parole back to the State of Maine. I am an educator who has been working with justice impacted individuals in pre- and post-release settings for 18 years in both a public school department setting as well as a university setting. I can affirm and promote the value and transformative impact of educational programming and have met several individuals throughout my career who embody the restorative effects of learning and growing. My academic research is in the field of the ecology of human development meaning this: place and proximity matter to growth. Where a person is and who they are surrounded by has manifold effects on how--and even if--a person grows. I believe that a responsible path forward to reestablish parole in Maine should include a careful evaluation of circumstances, honoring the impact on victims and families, and also the commitment to growth that a person demonstrates while incarcerated. The ability to return to their families, return to the workforce, and return to meaningful community contribution is the key to the corrections-over-punishment model. I speak on this topic as a private citizen and do not endorse the position of any organization with which I am associated.