



MAINE ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYERS

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Committee on Criminal Justice & Public Safety

100 State House Station Room 436

Augusta, ME 04330

**RE: LD 178 An Act to to Support Reentry and Reintegration into the  
Community**

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and Members of the  
Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee:

MACDL supports LD 178.

Parole has many benefits: it reduces prison populations, it gives inmates hope, it encourages growth and development, it promotes good behavior, it offers supervision and support of released inmates, and it provides a safer correctional experience for inmates and staff.

A fundamental principle in sentencing is the individualization of sentences. Maine law requires judges to look at the individual nature and characteristics of a defendant when handing down a sentence. Judges do their best with limited information. But defendants are like all people in that they have the capacity to change and to grow. Judges are tasked with the near impossible goal of determining what length of sentence is necessary for rehabilitation; they are in essence asked to look into the future.

Parole will do a far better job of individualizing sentences and of determining the proper length a sentence needs to be for rehabilitation than our current system. This is because parole boards will have access to years and sometimes decades worth of information. They will either be able to see growth and development or they won't. In other words, the amount of guesswork and prediction will be greatly reduced and they will be able to make decisions based on facts.

MACDL is excited and optimistic about the potential return of parole. We would request to be part of any work session on parole and we would welcome the opportunity to work with all stakeholders and legislators on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jeremy Pratt  
President-Elect, MACDL