



Pinny Beebe-Center
Senator, District 12

THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Pinny Beebe-Center and I represent Senate District 12, which includes Appleton, Camden, Cushing, Friendship, Hope, Matinicus, North Haven, Owl's Head, Rockland, Rockport, South Thomaston, St. George, Thomaston, Union, Vinalhaven, and Warren. I am here today as a co-sponsor in support of LD 1435 An Act to Reduce Commercial Sexual Exploitation and 1436 An Act to Provide Remedies for Survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation.

Over the past year, I have talked at length with Representative Reckitt about these issues and believe that we should not be punishing people, most often women or members of marginalized groups, for engaging in the selling of sex. These bills preserve existing laws that hold those who purchase sex accountable - especially those who exploit children, while removing the crime and therefore the potential for punishment and a criminal record for those who sell sex. We know too well the incredible barriers caused by criminal records for those seeking to build their lives - including employment, housing, and even such mundane but important acts like chaperoning a child's school field trip. LD 1436 provides a pathway to increased services and the ability to seal prior convictions for those who engaged in prostitution. These pieces too - are vital.

By retaining tools for law enforcement to hold those accountable who engage in exploitation while creating a process for law enforcement to identify and connect victims to services and allow for sealing prior convictions, these bills will provide the protection needed to truly support Maine's survivor population. I appreciate the time and commitment Representative Reckitt has given to improving the lives for those victimized by the sex trade and urge you to support these two pieces of legislation. Please vote "ought to pass" on LD 1435 and its complimentary bill, LD 1436.