



**Testimony in Opposition to  
LD986: An Act to Ensure Safer Communities by Increasing the Punishment for Crimes  
Involving Fentanyl**

April 18th, 2023

Good afternoon, Sponsor Senator Farrin, Committee Chair Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and the honorable Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. I am an organizer for the Maine Recovery Advocacy Project and a parent of a person in recovery. I am speaking to you today in opposition to LD986, an act that will increase punishment for crimes involving Fentanyl.

I understand the motivation for this bill; however, this bill will not achieve what you hope it would. It will not lower the amount of fentanyl on the streets, and it will not lower the number of overdoses in the state of Maine.

We are all concerned about how Fentanyl has entered the drug supply. Adding an increased punishment to the low level trafficker will not stop the supply from coming into this country from international sources – that would need to be addressed on the federal level.

The reality is that users on the local level are not always aware that Fentanyl is in their supply. Our legal definition for trafficking is based on very low amounts which will entrap users who are carrying amounts for personal use. Increasing the punishments to a Class A would increase their potential prison time to 30 years, effectively giving them no hope of ever recovering from what we now know is a brain disease and not a crime.

The common understanding is that addiction is an illness, so it makes no sense to treat it with a punishment, especially such a harsh punishment as 30 years in prison. For this reason, our network is urging the committee to oppose LD986. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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