



Pinny Beebe-Center
Senator, District 12

THE MAINE SENATE
131st Legislature

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Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony of Senator Pinny Beebe-Center introducing

LD 1633, "An Act to Establish a Community-based Reentry Program in All Department of Corrections Facilities"

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
April 25, 2023

Good afternoon, Representative Salisbury and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. I am Senator Pinny Beebe-Center, and I represent all of Knox County, except for Isle Au Haut and the town of Washington. Today I am pleased to present LD 1633, "An Act to Establish a Community-based Reentry Program in All Department of Corrections Facilities."

Reentry into the community after incarceration can be an intimidating process. Providing the necessary support to those preparing to reenter our communities is essential for the well-being of the community as a whole, as well as the individual. By crafting a peer-supported program, we can connect individuals who are preparing to reenter with those who have lived experience who can walk them through the process and better prepare them for the road ahead. This approach and support network will set up those returning with success and help reduce the chances of reoffending, keeping the individual and the community safer in the long run.

The bill works in two major parts. First, the bill creates a community-based reentry program administered by a community-based organization at each correctional facility operated by the Department of Corrections. The program is a peer-supported program that provides individualized reentry plans for incarcerated individuals starting two years prior to their release. These plans involve multiple meetings discussing the needs of the individual, including determining the individual's education, job training, substance use disorder treatment, housing needs, etc. The second part is the creation of the Peer Reentry Review Board. The Board will oversee, advise, review data, and make recommendations to the Community Based Reentry Program and report to the Commissioner of Corrections as well as to this committee.

I thank you for your time and consideration. Please direct all your questions to Bruce Noddin of the Maine Prisoner Reentry Network.