



Maine Sheriffs' Association

"One Team, One Mission"

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May 9, 2023

L.D. 931 – An Act to Expand the State's Workforce by Supporting the Transition from Incarceration to Employment

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, my name is Scott Nichols I am the Sheriff of Franklin County and 1st Vice-President of the Maine Sheriffs Association I am here on their behalf

Maine sheriffs discussed this bill and those present voted to oppose L D 931 – An Act to Expand the State's Workforce by Supporting the Transition from Incarceration to Employment

I'd like to begin by thanking Representative Sayre, the sponsor of this bill While we oppose this bill as written, the sponsor has made notable efforts to learn more about the county jails and the people they serve We deeply appreciate the outreach and openminded approach

The most recent concept draft of this bill incorporated objectives identified in a focus group report that was erroneously posted online The now retired jail facilitator working group had four focus groups and their work as individual members did not reflect the findings of the entire working group

The ratio of one intensive case manager (ICM) for every twenty inmates may be the gold standard, and we would agree that the addition of these critical support staff could significantly address the needs of incarcerated persons, but the feasibility of this implementation is daunting We do want to point out that we are not in opposition to these additional ICMs

The provision of specific items to inmates upon release outlined in this concept draft cannot be implemented without staff support As you have heard many times this session, many of Maine's regional and county jails are struggling to find staff Our fifteen jails average roughly 1500 inmates a day If every departing inmate is to be equipped with these provisions, it's simply not within our ability to adhere to this mandate as written, even with funding to support the purchases of items identified

Maine sheriffs appreciate the opportunity to share our position of opposition for LD 931, and we urge each of you to vote Ought Not To Pass I welcome any questions you may have

Sincerely,
Sheriff Scott Nichols
1st VP, Maine Sheriffs' Association