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Testimony of Representative Daniel Sayre, sponsor of
**LD 931, An Act to Expand the State's Workforce by Supporting the Transition from
Incarceration to Employment**
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I am Representative Daniel Sayre of Kennebunk, and I present for your consideration LD 931, An Act to Expand the State's Workforce by Supporting the Transition from Incarceration to Employment

I am here at the urging of local business leaders, Jean Ginn Marvin and Colby Marvin Bracy of the Nonantum Resort, who called to my attention their experience with hiring people who have transitioned out of incarceration. Most of these employees have successfully reentered the workforce, but they confronted many obstacles in making this transition. So, Ms. Marvin and Ms. Bracy encouraged me to introduce a bill to ease that transition and reduce those obstacles.

The bill as submitted is a concept draft containing a set of recommendations for legislative action derived from the Jail Navigator Focus Group on Transition/Reentry Recommendations to the Full Committee, November 2022. I have since learned that these recommendations may not reflect the final conclusions of all participants in this effort.

I recognize that the bill before you is a bit of a laundry list. I would like to narrow its scope to items 2 and 5.

Items 2 and 5 aim to do 3 things. First, provide intensive case managers (ICMs) at a ratio of 1 for each 20 residents. Second, help residents overcome the major barriers to successful reintegration into the community by having the ICM's guide them toward essential services, such as housing, transportation, food security and healthcare. And third, provide residents leaving incarceration with certain essential goods, such as personal hygiene items, fentanyl test strips, naloxone hydrochloride, a cellular telephone with limited minutes and recovery and prevention literature.

To elaborate in a bit more detail

- 1 **The provision of Intensive Case managers** The bill currently references only jails, but both jails and prisons should be covered by an ICM program. Further, the ratio of managers to residents may vary in consideration of the terms of incarceration and

resources available to different residents. An otherwise law-abiding individual who spends a few hours in a county jail is not likely to require the same level of care as someone who has served a multi-year sentence and who may be facing a lack of housing, employment, health coverage and a need for continued professional care for substance use disorder or physical or mental health challenges. The means to determine staffing levels for ICMs requires further analysis and the involvement of both the DOC and the Sheriffs as well as representatives of HHS and the recovery and reentry advocacy communities.

- 2 **Development of an assessment methodology to determine individual needs and resources.** Any requirement for the state to provide specific resources or referral to specific services should be based on the need of the individual to receive those resources, and on their ability to provide for those resources themselves.
- 3 **Distribution of supplies for reentry to the workforce.** Providing supplies such as pre-paid phones, medications, hygiene products, and the like may be essential for some individuals, but they should be distributed based on demonstrated need. And it is the function of the assessment methodology described above to determine that need.

In all frankness, none of these 3 goals are adequately articulated in the bill before you. I would like to request that this committee consider carrying this bill over to the next session so that this work can be completed.

I thank you for your consideration, and I will be happy to address any questions you might have.