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March 12, 2025

Senator Anne Bebe-Center - Chair  
Representative Tavis Hasenfus - Chair  
Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety  
100 State House Station Room 436  
Augusta, ME 04330

RE: LD 527 -- An Act to Establish Bail Officers to Administer the Maine Bail Code

Dear Senator Bebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

MACDL supports LD 527.

This bill would create the new position of bail officer. In essence it would professionalize the setting of bail by having an individual whose sole job is to set and review bail. This should minimize errors, minimize the amount of time people are incarcerated, and ensure that appropriate bail and bail conditions are set.

The bail officer would be required to undergo mandatory training and therefore they would be in a better position to make appropriate decisions regarding bail. The bail process would be fully remote which would remove the \$60 bail commissioner fee which is often onerous to indigent defendants. A \$60 bail commissioner fee is due when a bail commissioner shows up at a jail to set bail.

Additionally, the bill would allow for law enforcement and or corrections officers to fill out bail bonds according to the specifications set by the bail officer. This should help expedite the processing and releasing of Defendants.

This bill should be voted Ought to Pass.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this Committee on this important issue.

Sincerely,

/s/  
Jeremy Pratt, Esq.  
President, MACDL