

Maine PRISONER ADVOCACY Coalition



Peter M. Lehman, PhD

20 Lawrence Ave.
Thomaston, Maine 04861
(207) 542-1496
Peter@GrowInME.com

Testimony in opposition to LD 1024 to the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

March 31, 2025

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and distinguished members of the Committee:

My name is Peter Lehman and I live in Thomaston. I am a formerly incarcerated citizen and a person in long-term recovery.* I am testifying in opposition to LD 1024 on behalf of the Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition whose goal is to promote restorative practices in order to increase public safety and the health of our community.

LD 1024 is a direct and purposeful attempt to destroy the current Good Samaritan law in Maine by excluding two of the most relevant offenses.

Let's remember the purpose of the Good Sam law: it is to encourage and facilitate getting **prompt medical assistance** for any person suffering from negative effects of drug-taking.

Others engaged in drug activity are naturally unwilling to help, knowing that police responding to the call for assistance have often paid more attention to upping their arrest body-count than providing medical assistance. Often, in the past, by charging everyone in the vicinity with furnishing and/or trafficking. Coincidentally two of the crimes excluded by LD 1024.

Moreover, the overdose or other drug reaction creating the medical emergency has often been used as "probable cause" for suspecting those in the immediate vicinity. Treating the medical emergency as an opportunity to arrest the fish in the barrel. Especially, if they "look like" drug users.

Before Good Sam.

* In the interest of honesty and disclosure, a personal background statement is available on request.

In the past, before Good Sam, children were left to die or, at best, dumped outside emergency rooms or fire stations. Good Sam has **SAVED LIVES**.

Yes, these lives are WORTH saving: These are the lives of our children and our neighbors' children.

PLEASE defeat LD 1024.