



Maine Medical  
Association



**TESTIMONY OF THE MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION  
AND  
THE MAINE OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION**

**In Support of**

**LD 648- An Act to Expand the Supervised Community Confinement Program**

Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety  
Room 436, State House, Augusta, Maine  
Wednesday, April 23rd, 2025

Good Afternoon, Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Lani Graham. I am from Freeport, and I am here in support of LD 648 as a public health expert and as a physician. I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 648 on behalf of the Maine Medical Association and the Maine Osteopathic Association.

The Maine Medical Association (MMA) is a professional organization representing more than 4,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine. MMA's mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine people. The Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA) is a professional organization representing more than 1,200 osteopathic physicians, residents, and medical students in Maine whose mission is to serve the Osteopathic profession of the State of Maine through a coordinated effort of professional education, advocacy, and member services in order to ensure the availability of quality osteopathic health care to the people of this State.

The MMA and MOA's legislative committees have joined to advocate with one voice in support of LD 648.

This bill takes an important step toward creating fairness for youthful offenders while also improving our current criminal justice system.

Research done in the last several decades has helped us understand that the brain's frontal lobe, especially the prefrontal cortex, isn't fully mature until at least age 25.<sup>1</sup> Why does risky behavior present itself more frequently during adolescence? There is important scientific evidence showing that frontal brain regions, which are related to organization, planning, and inhibitory control, are not fully developed.<sup>2</sup> This immaturity of the youthful brain results in three important differences in behavior from the mature. Adolescents have

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<sup>1</sup><https://journeytocollege.mo.gov/when-does-the-brain-reach-maturity-its-later-than-you-think/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00627/full>

more difficulty controlling impulses, they are more vulnerable to peer pressure and their personalities are quite changeable.<sup>3</sup> Any parent can tell you that these differences may lead to episodes that infuriate parents but are laughed about later, or something far more serious.

We are not advocating for the release of every youthful offender or even to shorten sentences. A youthful offender would need to have completed 15 years of their sentence, during which time they would need to demonstrate fitness for return to a community. And even at that point there would be no certainty of the offender achieving Supervised Community Confinement (SCCP). They would simply become eligible to apply and would have to be evaluated by the very strict criteria now in place for the program. And individuals approved for SCCP would be under the watchful eye of the Department of Corrections until their full sentence was completed.

This law would offer an inducement for offenders to make the greatest possible effort to become fit to enter society. On-going supervision would be better and safer for communities than the current process where these same people emerge without any preparation. It would also offer hope to those inside and to their family and friends. Hope is a great motivator.

We have too many life sentences and no parole; too much punishment and not rehabilitation or restorative justice.

And this brings me to a very personal perspective. I have twice been a victim of violent attacks. Both attacks were traumatic and left me with emotional scars. While the perpetrators of those attacks were never arrested, I am clear that I would not have wanted those men held in a prison for lengthy sentences without the option of coming back into my community. And I am not alone in feeling that way. By a nearly 2 to 1 margin, most victims prefer a justice system that focuses more on rehabilitating people who commit crimes than punishing them.<sup>4</sup>

Thank you for your attention, I would be pleased to answer any questions you might have. I hope you will give full support to this excellent bill.

Thank you,

Lani Graham, MD

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00627/full>

<sup>4</sup> <https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Alliance-for-Safety-and-Justice-Crime-Survivors-Speak-September-2022.pdf>