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Testimony of Rep. Suzanne Salisbury presenting
**LD 1710, An Act Regarding the Authority to Transport Prisoners
Confined in Jail and the Use of Physical Force with Respect to
Prisoners and Persons Who Have Been Arrested**
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Service

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I am Sue Salisbury and I represent House District 128, which includes part of Westbrook. I am here today to present **LD 1710, An Act Regarding the Authority to Transport Prisoners Confined to Jail and the Use of Physical Force with Respect to Prisoners and Persons Who Have Been Arrested**.

I am pleased to present this bill to this committee finally. Since last session, I have been working with Sheriff Joyce to develop a bill that addresses the safety of prisoners, corrections staff, medical personnel and the public when prisoners are being transported out of jails.

Some of you may know that I am the wife of a retired K9 corrections officer (CO). My husband was a member of the Department of Corrections, Special Investigations Unit and Special Ops Group. He was a green-pinned officer and, therefore, was armed at all times. When he was tasked with accompanying an inmate to the hospital or other activity off prison grounds, he could protect the inmate and those around them.

You may not know that I have a daughter who currently works as a CNA (soon to be an RN) at Maine Medical Center in Portland. What was most compelling to me about this bill was learning that if a resident of one of the local jails was a patient on her floor, the CO that was sitting in the room with the inmate could not intervene if she were attacked. That CO is giving a false sense of security to the staff and visitors of the facility. The impression is that they are there as a means of protection, but with how the current law is written, they are forbidden to go "hands-on" should anything happen. The inmate is also at risk because if someone attempted to harm them in any way, the CO would not be able to intervene.

I have been working closely with the Department of Corrections on this bill, they have recommended some additional wording and one other small potential change. We will ensure that we have that to the committee before the work session.

I hope the committee can recognize the hard work and collaboration that went into this bill and will work with me and other stakeholders to pass it.

Thank you for your consideration. I am happy to try to answer any questions you may have. Sheriff Joyce is here as well.