



Pinny Beebe-Center
Senator, District 12

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony of Senator Pinny Beebe-Center in Support of
**LD 1911, "An Act to Automatically Seal Criminal History Record Information for
Certain Crimes"**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
January 8, 2026

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, I am Senator Beebe-Center. I represent all of Knox County, excluding Isle Au Haut and the town of Washington. I am here today in support of LD 1911, sponsored by Senator Talbot Ross.

As Senate Chair of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, I work to advance policies that strengthen public safety, improve community well-being, and ensure our justice system is fair and effective. LD 1911 meets all of those goals.

Twenty-five percent of adult Mainers live with a criminal record. In a rural state like Maine, particularly in counties like Knox, this affects nearly every family, employer, and community. Most people with records are not dangerous. They are parents, workers, and neighbors who have completed their sentences, paid their fines, and moved forward. Yet old convictions often remain lifelong barriers to employment and housing.

Studies show that people who have access to stable housing¹ and employment after involvement with the justice system are less likely to be rearrested and tend to remain crime-free for longer periods of time². People who can work and live securely are far less likely to reoffend. Public safety for everyone depends on expanding opportunities for stability.

LD 1911 limits eligibility for sealing criminal records to those individuals who have remained conviction-free for long periods of time. Serious and violent crimes are excluded. This bill does not erase accountability. It recognizes rehabilitation.

This legislation also supports Maine's economy. According to a 2025 Maine Center for Economic Policy report,³ 10% of Mid-coast Mainers live below the federal poverty level. Yet, many qualified Mainers are excluded from jobs because of old, low-level records that have no connection to the work

¹ Kirk, D. S., Barnes, G. C., Hyatt, J. M., & Kearley, B. W. (2017). *The impact of residential change and housing stability on recidivism*. Journal of Experimental Criminology.

² Visher, C. A., Debus, S., & Yahner, J. (2008). *Employment after prison: A longitudinal study of former prisoners*. Journal of Criminal Justice.

³ Myall, James. (2025). *State of Working Maine 2025: Strengthening Economic Opportunity in Rural Communities and Beyond*. Maine Center for Economic Policy.



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they seek. Clean Slate policies help employers fill open positions, decrease wage disparities, and support a stable workforce.

LD 1911 balances accountability with opportunity. It strengthens public safety, supports rural employers, and gives families who have already paid their debt a fair chance to move forward.

I urge the committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1911. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Pinny Beebe-Center
State Senator, District 12