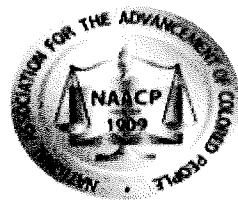


MAINE STATE PRISON BRANCH OF THE



807 CUSHING ROAD WARREN, ME 04864-4600

Foster Bates *President*

Jeffrey Taylor *Vice-President*

Gregory Williams *Treasurer*

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
State House Station 2
Augusta, Me 04333

January 8, 2026

Testimony of the Maine State Prison Branch of the NAACP

In Support of LD 1941: An Act to Implement Recommendations of the Commission to Examine Reestablishing Parole.

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for your time this morning. We all know the well-documented critique of parole. There is no need for the NAACP to reiterate what has already been studied and debated for decades.

Instead, we ask each of us to reflect on three fundamental questions:

1. Do we truly believe in forgiveness
2. Do we truly believe in redemption
3. Do we truly believe in healing

If the answer to these questions is yes, then passing a comprehensive parole bill is the correct thing to do.

For decades, Maine has workshopped and examined parole, yet we are no closer to meaningful progress. We continue to hold today's Mainers accountable for the parole violations of individuals from 50 years ago—individuals who, in many cases, are no longer alive. It is neither fair nor reasonable to allow the mistakes of the distant past to dictate the future of our justice system.

The NAACP believes that this Committee can begin a genuine healing process for everyone by taking the step to bring meaningful change to rehabilitation, education, and treatment with the passage of LD 1941. Healing starts with forgiveness, and forgiveness opens the path to redemption.

In closing, the MSP NAACP Branch is tremendously proud of Governor Janet Mills for her courage and steadfast leadership in standing up to the President of the United States to protect the rights of Maine citizens. We respectfully ask that Governor Mills bring that same determination to the issue of parole.

Governor Mills, you have a rare opportunity to shape a defining legacy in Maine's history by taking a step no governor has taken in more than fifty years: restoring a parole system in our state. Reestablishing parole would mark a bold and forward-looking commitment to meaningful criminal justice and prison reform, and it would signal to the nation that Maine is ready to lead with fairness, dignity, and accountability.

Governor Mills, you made the most memorable statements ever made by a sitting Maine governor, "See you in court, Mr. President." It reflected courage, conviction, and a willingness to stand firmly for what is right. Today, the NAACP is hopeful to see that same spirit as you consider signing legislation to bring parole back to the Great State of Maine.

This moment offers a chance to open a new chapter—one grounded in justice, rehabilitation, and hope.

Respectfully submitted

Maine State Prison Branch of the NAACP