

Honorable Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Esteemed Members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Deborah Sachare, I am a resident of Brunswick, and I am speaking today in strong support of LD 1941.

I come before you today as someone who is moved by facts and figures. I am a researcher and Ph.D. student who also has a loved one currently serving a de facto Life sentence in Maine. I moved to Maine to be closer to my partner, and I want to help make my new community safer. Based on what I have learned about parole, and specifically the type of supportive parole this bill seeks to enact, I believe parole can help make my new community safer.

Parole is the safest, most clearly demonstrated way to implement a supportive reentry process. However, some argue that parole is too progressive and shows that we are "soft-on-crime." So does that mean Texas too progressive? Or Alabama too "soft-on-crime"? The answer is clearly no. So I'll quote Republican Governor of Kansas, Sam Brownback explaining that without parole, "recidivism rates are too high and create too much of a financial burden on states without protecting public safety. My state and others are reinventing how we do business." If those red states can do it, why not Maine? Parole would have major benefits on Maine's economy, support a safer return of members to community, and provide greater care to victims than the current system.

In addition to supportive reentry, I believe Maine must care for our victims and survivors of crime. We must listen to our victim/survivors and ensure that their needs of community safety are heard first and foremost. By a margin of 2 to 1, victims prefer that the criminal legal system focus more on rehabilitating people who commit crimes than punishing them. If elected, I plan to support meaningful accountability in wrongdoers and provide avenues of voluntary financial support to victim/survivors of crime by building on the success of the Maine Model of Corrections' remote work initiative. In fact, by a 28 point margin, Maine voters believe that too many people serve long prison sentences and that we should be doing more to get incarcerated people into rehabilitation and job training, rather than keeping them incarcerated.

It is based upon these facts, the broad support of Maine citizens, and the stated desires of survivors that I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1941 today. Thank you.

Deborah Sachare
Brunswick, ME