



January 8th, 2026

Testimony in support of LD1941: An Act to Implement Recommendations of the Commission to Examine Reestablishing Parole.

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Eli Durand-McDonnell, I am from Bar Harbor, and I work as the Policy Director at Maine Youth Power, a youth-led youth movement working throughout rural and suburban Maine to win human dignity, equity and a liveable future for all. Today, I am speaking on behalf of my colleague Anghy Tehuitzil, and the whole of Maine Youth Power, as I urge you to support **LD1941: An Act to Implement Recommendations of the Commission to Examine Reestablishing Parole.**

While Maine Youth Power does not exclusively focus on the criminal justice system, our membership understands the power of parole, and we envision a Maine criminal legal process that is focused on rehabilitation-as opposed to increased incarceration. This bill would be a vital step toward that vision. Parole is a rigorous process that allows incarcerated individuals—specifically those who have demonstrated growth and accountability—an opportunity to be released and transition back into society with support and dignity.

From a youth perspective, many long sentences are given to individuals who commit these crimes at a young age, and are now unable to have their sentences reviewed. Mistakes made at a young age could seal a young Mainers fate to a life of imprisonment, as opposed to the opportunity for growth and reintegration. Other youth in Maine have loved ones incarcerated without the opportunity of parole, which can create long lasting trauma and perpetuate cycles of instability. Instead, we believe in smart, humane reforms that create real pathways back into the community. Parole is one of those pathways.

Once again, I urge you to support LD 1941: An Act to Implement Recommendations of the Commission to Examine Reestablishing Parole.

Sincerely,
Eli Durand-McDonnell and Anghy Tehuitzil