

132nd Legislature
Senate of
Maine
Senate District 29

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Testimony of Senator Anne Carney in support of funding for
LD 981, An Act to Provide Electronic Notification for Victims of Crime
before the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
February 25, 2026

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and esteemed members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, my name is Anne Carney, I represent Senate District 29, and I am here testifying in support of funding for LD 981, "An Act to Provide Electronic Notification for Victims of Crime."

Our job in the Judiciary Committee and this Legislature is to protect victims. Maine is the only state in the nation without a statewide automated victim notification system. With the time lag inherent to our current paper notification system, many victims of crime may feel unsafe or insecure not knowing whether their perpetrator is incarcerated or has returned to their community.

This bill is an opportunity for the State to act now to provide victims with a greater sense of security by making accessible immediate information about changes to the status of perpetrators of crimes. Victims, law enforcement officers, family members, concerned citizens, and judges could choose to be alerted electronically via text, email, phone, or teletypewriter when an offender is released or transferred. While these notifications are for any crime, they are particularly critical for domestic violence and sexual assault survivors who, research indicates, worry most about revictimization.

After the initial hearing on LD 981, a work group was created to ensure all potential privacy and safety concerns were addressed. The amended version of the bill that now sits on the appropriations table reflects the input of both the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence and the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

We have evidence that this approach works, with effective pilot programs in Aroostook, Penobscot, and Somerset Counties as well as Two Bridges. A small investment of \$244,000 as part of this supplemental budget would take this system statewide, providing an invaluable service to protect the safety and peace of mind to all victims of crime and their loved ones.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration. I welcome any questions you may have.

Anne Carney
State Senator, District 29