



JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
111 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA MAINE  
04333-0111

RANDALL A. LIBERTY  
COMMISSIONER

**TESTIMONY OF**  
**RANDALL A. LIBERTY, COMMISSIONER**  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**

**Neither For Nor Against**

**LD 271:** *" An Act to Recruit and Retain Department of Corrections Facilities Support Staff"*

**before the**

**Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice & Public Safety**

February 22, 2021

Senator Deschambault and Representative Warren and other distinguished members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety committee, I am Randall A. Liberty, Commissioner of the Department of Corrections here to provide testimony neither for nor against LD 271.

The Department recognizes the importance of this issue. We take seriously the recruitment and retention of Corrections staff.

I am immensely proud of the work of all staff throughout the Department of Corrections.

Corrections, as many of you know, is a challenging environment, no matter if you're an accountant, a behavioral health clinician, a maintenance or grounds worker, a HR professional, or a corrections officer.

The level of conflict, of chaos, of stress is high. But corrections is also an incredibly rewarding profession. Everyday our staff create pathways for residents toward redemption. Staff offer a level of stability, of guidance, and modeling that many individuals in our custody have never had and are very thankful for.

All the staff throughout the department provide help to those in our custody. It's our mission. I see the pride among our staff knowing they are positive part of an incarcerated person's journey.

We agree with Representative Pluecker that the issue of wages and compensation, recruitment and retention deserve prompt attention and conclusion.

However, our testimony on this bill remains the same as it was last session.

We support the position of the administration, which is that issues of wages and benefits may be best worked through at the bargaining table.

As an official stance on this bill, the department is NF/NA, because we would like to allow the collective bargaining process time to take place as the administration has so begun.

Our concern is that this bill, if passed, could continue the inequity in pay that the sponsor is intending to correct. It is for this reason the department is in line with the administration that to ensure fair and equitable wage and benefit practices, this issue be brought to the bargaining table.

I am happy to answer question and will be available for the work session.

Randall A. Liberty