

M.C.C.A.

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MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION

LD 419, An Act Regarding Participation in Public Works Projects by Pretrial Inmates

February 24, 2021

Chair Deschambault, Chair Warren, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, and my name is Stephen Gorden and in addition to serving as chair of the board of commissioners for Cumberland County, I am writing today in my role as board president of the Maine County Commissioners Association. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to the Committee in support of LD 419.

About MCCA. Briefly, the Maine County Commissioners Association was established in 1890 to assist Maine's county government in providing vital services to Maine citizens in a responsive, efficient, and credible manner. The Association is based in Augusta and currently represents 15 of Maine's 16 counties and is governed by a board with representation from each participating county.

Our position on LD 419. Currently, inmates who have been sentenced to jail are able to work in certain public works projects and, through good behavior, reduce the term of their incarceration. This is a good program that not only provides positive influence on inmates, but it also helps mitigate incarcerations costs for counties to the extent inmates are released early.

Importantly, however, this program does not apply to inmates who are awaiting trial; rather, it only applies those who have been sentenced. This limitation deprives inmates who are awaiting trial from the opportunity to make positive contributions to the community and reduce the length of any sentence they might receive if they are later sentenced to jail.

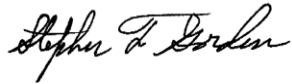
Testimony in support of LD 419

February 24, 2021

Page 2

We support LD 419 because it corrects this problem and extends this important program to pretrial inmates. We hope the Committee will similarly support LD 419.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen T. Gorden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" being more prominent.

Stephen Gorden
President

cc: Commissioner Brian Hobart, Chair, MCCA Legislative Committee
James I. Cohen, Verrill Dana, LLP, MCCA Legislative Counsel