

Mt View Correctional Facility
1182 Dover Rd
Charleston, ME 04422
March 1, 2021

Senator Deschambeault, Representative Warren, and Honorable Members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee,

My name is Ralph E. Nichols and I have lived in the Assisted Living Unit at Mountain View Correctional Facility(MVCF) for over 4 months due to a heart attack and triple bypass heart surgery. After I transferred out of ALU, I volunteered to working assist individuals who lived in the ALU for eleven months, until I was transferred to the minimum side of MVCF. I am writing to support LD 476 An Act To Provide Licensed Assisted Living and Nursing Facilities Levels of Care for Incarcerated Persons.

LD 476 is definitely needed and long overdue. I am also attempting to get authorization from Warden Morin to allow me to talk to and get testimonies from residents of the ALU.

In my short time(15 months) in being exposed to the operations of the ALU at MVCF, I have experienced several individuals who have passed from cancer and /or other life ending conditions while being alone. I have experienced how the ALU at MVCF is supposed to have a medical staff in the unit at all times, but on the average they are only there about six (6) of the twenty-four(24) hours in a day. this is how an 80 plus year old gentleman's left on the cold concrete floor after he fell and hit his head. The gentleman had dementia and wandered around the unit and was considered a nuisance because he because he was in need of constant monitoring by the ALU staff.

With no medical staff in the ALU checking on the resident and only having the Maine Department of Corrections(MDOC) staff doing bed checks for security, is where things started to go wrong. I can only surmise that when the MDOC staff found the ALU resident on the floor, he thought "He is sleeping and not bothering anyone, all is good."

Another gentleman who was diagnosed with life ending cancer, was transferred to ALU only to pass on without ever being allowed any visitors in ALU per MDOC policy. He was physically unable to go to the “visits room”, so he died alone. This facility also does not even have a hospice program. He was also within six months of being released, which is so disappointing that he had to go through that alone, no family or friends. I believe that LD 476 will require that MDOC make changes to the current practices of caring for ALU residents a very positive way.

Thank-you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ralph E. Nichols #115807

MVCF

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