



April 5th, 2021

Senator Susan Deschambault, Chair  
Representative Charlotte Warren, Chair  
Joint Committee On Criminal Justice and Public Safety  
State House, Room 436  
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: LD 696; *An Act To Prohibit Solitary Confinement in Maine's Corrections System*

Dear Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety,

My name is Mark Joyce and I am a Managing Attorney at Disability Rights Maine (DRM). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of *LD 696; An Act To Prohibit Solitary Confinement in Maine's Corrections System*

The practice of solitary confinement should not be imposed on people with disabilities.

Solitary Confinement and Mental Illness in U.S. Prisons: A Challenge for Medical Ethics  
Jeffrey L. Metzner and Jamie Fellner *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law* Online March 2010, 38 (1) 104-108; <http://jaapl.org/content/38/1/104>  
<https://www.aclu.org/report/caged-devastating-harms-solitary-confinement-prisoners-physical-disabilities>

Prisons and Jails are subject the Americans with Disabilities Act and must engage in the reasonable accommodation process for individuals with disabilities. In looking at the language of this bill, DRM believes that it may need additional language improvement to end this practice. DRM in discussing this bill with stakeholders understands that there may be an amendment being proposed to create a working group to develop stronger language and research on what the best practices should be for possible future legislation. DRM would like to suggest that any such work group must include input on the rights of persons with disabilities in the correctional setting. For this reason, DRM urges this Committee to support LD 696 as amended. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Mark Joyce  
Managing Attorney