

EMILY TROLL
South Portland

To the honorable Committee Chairs Senator Deschambault and Senator Warren, and to the members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

I'm writing today to ask that you please support LD 1175: An Act to Prohibit Excessive Telephone, Video, and Commissary Charges in Maine Jails and Prisons. My name is Emily Troll, and I live in South Portland.

As a schoolteacher, I have seen many families deeply hurt by incarceration. Especially for young children that I've worked with, to miss a family member for years and years is disorienting and painful. And that trauma can impact so much of their future experience.

If this law were passed, families would be able to stay in touch and preserve connections without spending their last dollar. We all know that a feeling of belonging and connection can go a long way in supporting mental health, and therefore reducing harmful behaviors. This is about basic needs. And people who are incarcerated should be able to buy basic supplies, and speak to their loved ones without financial pressure. When basic needs are met, people are more able to grow and learn and be good citizens.

To charge these fees is to perpetuate a cycle of poverty, disconnection, and fear. It is deeply unfair. I urge you to pass this bill immediately and ensure that its implementation is swift and effective.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Emily Troll
South Portland