

Larry Dansinger
Bangor

May 9, 2021

To members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee,

I am writing in support of LD 1592, An Act To Decriminalize Engaging in Prostitution, Strengthen the Laws against Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Allow a Person Convicted of Engaging in Prostitution To Petition the Court To Expunge the Record of Conviction.

I do not believe locking people up benefits public safety. Punishment does not teach a positive lesson. It damages those who are locked up, making them more likely to be charged with (and sometimes commit) other acts considered criminal. It does not provide helpful closure for many who are the victims of crime. It is expensive and takes money away from public health and other programs that can more effectively address public safety needs such as mental health support, substance use disorder programs, poverty alleviation, and insuring adequate health care and economic security, among others.

LD 1592 stops the locking up of people for something that should not be a crime.

The real issue here is consent between adults. When two people choose to have sexual relations, it should not be the business of any government to declare some relations legal and others illegal. In any situation where there is consenting sexual relations, there is a transfer of money or other resources. There are plenty of "one night stands" that include buying of a meal, or giving a gift from one person to another, or some other exchange. That is true for married partners, unmarried partners, good friends, and people who barely know each other. To designate some relations acceptable and others not acceptable is inconsistent and unfair.

The fact that some people, usually women, are arrested or sanctioned in some way for prostitution and others, usually men, are not is also a form of illegal discrimination.

Please vote ought to pass on LD 1592. While I believe prostitution, soliciting of sexual relations, should not be a crime at all, decriminalization is a step in the right direction.

Sincerely,

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