

David Getchell
Gray

Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren and distinguished members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, thank you for allowing me to testify in favor of LD 1588, Resolve, To Convene a Working Group To Identify and Find Replacements for Certain Stigmatizing References throughout the Maine Revised Statutes and Government Publications.

My name is David Getchell and I live in Gray. I don't have much to say on this one. The preamble at the beginning of this testimony where I refer to you all as distinguished and address you with the titles with which you have earned through your elections, is something I do out of courtesy. I recognize the accomplishments this board has made and I understand that as a member of society who wants to receive respect, it is incumbent upon me to give respect. That respect is sorely lacking in our government documents when it comes to people who have entered the carceral system or people who use drugs. This is something that the State needs to do if it means to take seriously the problems we face with crime and substance use.

Updating our Government documents with language that represents the humanity of a person is a step away from stigmatization and othering, which as I know from being a part of some of your hearings this committee recognizes is an issue and wants to act on it. I recommend you vote "ought to pass" on this LD and we can begin to made a dent on this issue. Thank you for your time.