

May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Good morning Senator Deschambault, Representative Warren, and esteemed members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety:

My name is Izzy Ostrowski, and I am a social services worker in Portland, ME. I am writing to you today on behalf of a client who is in full support of LD 1478: An Act to Decriminalize Homelessness. The client, who wishes to remain anonymous, wrote the following:

*I am vehemently against this bill because of past experiences of living on the street. I can't see how being homeless can be illegal. I got to that point because of mental health reasons. It's very alarming once you hit rock bottom, but it can happen rather easily.*

*There was a lack of resources for when I was stuck on the streets. I had to wait for a homeless shelter in Lewiston otherwise I was sleeping outside the Jubilee Center, also in Lewiston, at night.*

*I don't like how you can get charged for crimes while having nothing. I feel like it is scapegoating the problem.*

For the above reasons, the client urgently asks you to vote "Ought to Pass" on LD 1478. Thank you for your time.