

Daria Cullen
York
LD 178

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee,

My name is Daria Cullen. I live in York County. I'm writing to you today in favor of LD 178 and the effort to re-establish parole in Maine. I support this bill because I believe a criminal legal system without parole is a system without checks and balances as evidenced by the racial disparities.

Maine is one of seven states with a Black/white incarceration rate higher than 9 to 1 yet Black people make up 1% of the state's population. Having a Parole committee to review sentences and circumstances leading to conviction will help to address this issue and can reduce those numbers.

I also believe Parole promotes public safety in that it offers an incentive for incarcerated people to take an active and meaningful role in their rehabilitation. And Parole offers an opportunity for the victims to be heard which is not a condition of the current release option available through the Supervised Community Confinement Program.

Additionally, it costs \$76K per year to incarcerate one person, and more as they get older. It's not sustainable and those funds would go a long way towards investing in people and building thriving, not fractured, communities. Lastly, bringing back Parole recognizes a person's humanity and fosters a pathway to healing and rehabilitation that long-term incarceration does not.

For all of these reasons I hope I can count on your support for LD 178. Thank you for your work and for considering my opinion.

Sincerely,

Daria Cullen