

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

My name is Suzanne Menair and I am a resident of Sidney, Maine. For the last 7 years I have been an instructor at Colby College. I also grew up in Maine and lived with my father, stepmother and three brothers in in Alna, Maine.

I am writing to you today to show my absolute support for LD 178 and the effort to re-establish parole in Maine.

I support this bill because my family is justice-impacted. Almost twenty years ago, my uncle, my father's brother, went to prison for financially exploiting my grandfather. Shortly after my uncle was imprisoned, my father and my grandfather died, leaving our family divided and grieving. Time rolled on with no lessening of anger, grief and shame until my uncle was paroled about five years later.

Once my uncle was paroled, he worked tirelessly to repay the monies he had taken from our grandfather's estate—with his financial help my husband and I were able to put a down payment on our first home. He has since made personal amends with each of us. And now, he comes every year to the Christmas dinner that I host in my home, which is always a big boisterous family affair.

The healing that my family has been blessed with would not have been possible if my uncle had not been paroled and thus able to do the restorative work to bring our family back together.

I ask you to re-establish a parole system in Maine so that other families who have been justice-impacted can be reunited and healed as mine has been.

Thank you for your work and for considering my opinion. I hope I can count on your support for LD 178.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Menair