

Dear Members of the Criminal Justice Committee,

My name is Glen Tatro, I am a mental health-crisis worker (MHRT-CSP) and I am employed by the Freeport Police Department as their crisis and mental health worker. Thank you for the opportunity to speak/ share testimony with you. As a licensed social worker and crisis responder, I have seen firsthand the challenges that individuals face when reintegrating into society after being released from prison. I am here today to express my strong support for LD 178 and the reinstatement of parole in Maine.

As a mental health professional, I have seen firsthand the impact that incarceration can have on individuals and their families. While some people do need to be incarcerated for the safety of our communities, it is important that we have mechanisms in place to support rehabilitation and reentry.

Research has shown that access to parole can reduce recidivism rates and increase successful reentry. According to a report by the National Institute of Justice, individuals who are released on parole have a lower recidivism rate than those who are released without supervision. Parole can provide individuals with the necessary support and resources to reintegrate into society and avoid returning to criminal behavior.

Moreover, reinstating parole in Maine could also alleviate the burden on our correctional system. According to the Vera Institute of Justice, the average annual cost per incarcerated person in Maine is over \$50,000. By providing individuals with the necessary support to successfully reintegrate into society, we can reduce the number of individuals returning to prison and save taxpayer dollars.

In addition, research has shown that the use of parole can lead to a reduction in recidivism rates. According to a study by the National Institute of Justice, individuals who were released on parole were significantly less likely to return to prison than those who were released without supervision.

One of the key challenges is the lack of support and resources available to individuals upon release. Without access to stable housing, employment, and healthcare, many individuals are at a higher risk of reoffending and returning to prison. Parole can provide a crucial safety net and support system for individuals as they navigate their transition back into society.

I have worked with Steven Matthew Clark and recently have been in contact with him. I have been extremely impressed with his accomplishments while he is incarcerated. His dedication to education, rehabilitation, and helping others is truly inspiring. I have no doubt that he will continue to be a positive influence in society when he is given the opportunity to be released on parole.

Steven has demonstrated that with the right support and resources, individuals can transform their lives and become contributing members of society. Rather, I have explored several facets of coaching with Steven. I recently attended one of his online Awakening Exchanges where his passion is bring people together to support them with human connection. It is really impressive.

In conclusion, I hope you will support LD 178 and the reinstatement of parole in Maine. By providing individuals with access to parole, we can support rehabilitation and reentry, reduce recidivism rates, and alleviate the burden on our correctional system. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you kindly for your time,

Glen Tatro