



Restorative Justice Project
Maine

20 April 2023

Senator Beebe-Center, Rep. Salisbury and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. My name is Jay Davis, I live in Belfast, and I write in strong support for LD 1514 on behalf of the Restorative Justice Project Maine, which is based in Belfast.

We are all well aware that incarceration brings major disruptions to the lives of those sentenced to jail or prison. Families are splintered, jobs are lost, income stops and housing, which is already an issue in many parts of Maine, becomes a major problem. Re-entering society is difficult on many levels. But with no place to go home to, the impulse is strong to return to where trouble lay because at least it's a known quantity.

We believe jails and prisons should strive to make lives better even though their very existence can't help but do the opposite. In RJP's work at the Maine Coastal Regional Reentry Center it became clear that housing is a major need for many residents. LD 1514 would provide temporary housing under the control of the Department of Corrections that will help residents get their new lives in order.

It costs taxpayers \$78,000 a year to house an inmate at the Maine State Prison. Anything we can do to keep people out of prison is not only humane but a major cost-saving as well. LD 1514 is a clear-headed step in that direction. Please give an Ought-to-Pass recommendation when it comes before you for a vote later this spring.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jay Davis
Belfast
Member, RJPM Legislative Committee

Restorative Justice Project

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LD 1514

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