



March 25, 2021

LD 512, An Act to Provide Intensive Case Managers to Counties That Do Not Have County Jails or Regional Jails.

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Bruce Noddin and I am the Executive Director of The Maine Prisoner Re-Entry Network or MPRN, a state-wide non-profit focused on providing peer support and coordinating community resources for hundreds of individuals returning to Maine communities from prison and jail.

I am writing in support of LD 512, An Act to Provide Intensive Case Managers to Counties That Do Not Have County Jails or Regional Jails.

In addition to MPRN's role as peer support and resource connector, MPRN has assembled and represents a statewide network of literally hundreds of organizations, committed to supporting returning citizens as part of a community resource plan, tailored to each individual's needs. ICM's are a critical part of that network. Especially in the more rural parts of Maine, ICM's have been invaluable in connecting individuals who are reentering, and often in recovery, to critical resources. e.g. housing, substance use treatment, PCP's, counseling, food, clothing, recovery, and spiritual supports.

Not to single one person out, but she is a great example. Sherri Fraser is an ICM in rural Washington and Hancock Counties. Originally she was stationed at Washington County Jail, but like other ICM's has been recently assigned to community Case Management in addition to her jail case management duties. Seems like a lot of work for one person, but that's a conversation for another time. We had a gentleman who was releasing from prison after a long sentence and is in his sixties. We reached out to Sherri and, in coordination with our team, she connected this gentleman with all of the necessary resources and supports prior to his release from prison. Following his release, she continued to offer case management services during this man's transition.

Sherri is an example of the value LD 512 will bring to less populated parts of our state and how and imbedded ICM can develop a network of reliable and proven resources. Once the ICM makes the referrals, the community can take it from there. The Team at MPRN sees so many folks who are forced to live in service center communities, yet home very often many miles away. Typically disconnected from natural supports and the comfort of living in familiar surroundings. We hope that LD 512 will be adopted, an effort to address the needs of underserved rural communities and populations.

In addition, we hope you will reference Cullen Ryan's written testimony. Cullen is the Executive Director of CHOM (Community Housing of Maine). Among other points, Cullen references "Statewide Homeless Council: Maine Criminal Justice System Blueprint for Ending and Preventing Homelessness" A collaborative community initiative, written in 2019, indicating the need for more access to intensive case management, as a path to reduced homelessness.

Thank you!

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Maine Prisoner Re-Entry Network (MPRN)