

April 7, 2021

Good Afternoon,

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee, My name is Kandie Cleaves. I am submitting testimony in support of, **LD 1009: Resolve, Resolve, To Create a Health Care Ombudsman Position To Serve in Maine's County Jails.**

While I support this bill it has come to my attention that additional changes would make it better in helping to deal with the concerns frequently heard regarding the jails in Maine around not receiving medications and needed mental health care in a timely manner. Due to this I also wish to express my support of amendments the sponsor of the bill will put forward.

From conversations with many law enforcement officers and with individuals who are in or have been in Maine's jail system it is clear that things need to change. Our jail system was not designed to be the provider of mental or physical health care on the scale of which is currently needed, unfortunately until other changes are able to be made it becomes a necessity to do all possible to make sure these needs are met. It is important to remember that not only do those incarcerated deserve humane treatment, those of us who support the jails via our taxes and who have been victims of crime in the past, also deserve to know that our jail system is doing what it can to make certain that we provide the supports and reduce the barriers for those incarcerated so that when they get out they have a better chance of success.

Thank you for your time.

Kandie Cleaves,
Garland