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Good Morning
Senators Claxton, Baldacci and Moore and Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
My name is Jeffrey Kerr and I stand in favor of this amendment to the bill LD#1009
10 years ago, I was in the county jail and having had brain surgery I needed my medicine as it was prescribed to me. So, it was a complete shock to me when they brought an armed guard around with the nurse to take me down the hall to the nurse's office. Although what was more surprising is the fact that they wanted me to change what was prescribed to me. They wanted me to sign a paper saying I would take the generic form of Dilantin. Dilantin is twice as strong as the generic brand. Knowing this and that it is really important to do just as the specialist says after having had brain surgery, I said "only if my doctor says yes will I do it." I then asked for my phone because my doctor's number is it. They said "no". I later found out that many times this is done because it is more expensive to provide the name brand. When it is not your area of expertise it is difficult to make informed safe decisions.
After this, I was taken back to my cell in handcuffs. As soon as my medicine ran out I had none because they refused to provide the name brand of medicine that had been prescribed. They also refused to reach out to the specialist to inquire about the safety of changing the prescribed medicine.
Having recently interviewed inmates as a member of the Board of Visitors in Franklin County, many times this is one of my first questions. Having done so, I know for a fact that there are more stories like mine.
We are all people and people make mistakes and I can not think of one person that has not made one. I believe this is a great bill and I really would like to see this go through as amendment.

Sincerely, Jeffrey Kerr
Board of Visitors & Reentry coach