
**Testimony of Andrea Mancuso on behalf of the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence
In Support of LD 259: “An Act to Establish the Criminal Records Review Commission in
Statute”**

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, I am writing on behalf of the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence (MCEDV)¹ to provide our perspective on LD 259, “An Act to Establish the Criminal Records Review Commission in Statute.”

As policymakers contemplate what actions should be taken to limit the collateral consequences of criminal convictions, careful thought must be given both to unintended consequences and the criminal legal system’s accountability to victims of crime. Conversations convened by through various committees and working groups over the last several years have highlighted that attempting to categorize which crimes we are most concerned about and which we are not, as well as what processes should be utilized to give convicted individuals some form of relief from long-term economic and social consequences of their convictions, is complex and does not readily lend itself to simple solutions. The approach of continuing to convene a broad range of interested parties to work through these issues and bring forward thoughtful proposals is one we continue to support.

Having represented the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence on various iterations of the Criminal Records Review Committee since 2019, I have observed firsthand that the stop and start nature of the way this group has been required to do this work has hampered the ability of the group to report back with anything other than piecemeal proposals. The issues are not simple, and if the policy goal is for the group to report back with some sort of comprehensive proposal that thoughtfully addresses the long-term collateral consequences of criminal convictions and has broad stakeholder buy-in, as opposed to continued attempts to address these complicated issues piecemeal, the approach proposed in LD 259, which would allow for longer term, continuous work is the right next step.

¹ MCEDV serves a membership of the eight regional domestic violence resource centers as well as two culturally specific service provider. Collectively, our member programs provided services to more than 12,000 victims of domestic abuse and violence in Maine last year, including court advocacy services in the civil and criminal courts to more than 5,000.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective with you. MCEDV and our member programs are available to support the Committee's work on this proposal in whatever way might be helpful.

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