



Maine Chiefs of Police Association

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Statement in opposition to

L.D. 1335, An Act to Prohibit Life Sentences

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

March 31, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Jason Moen. I am the Chief of the Auburn Police Department, and President of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association. I am submitting testimony on behalf of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association in opposition to 1335.

The mission of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association is to secure a closer official and personal relationship among Maine Police Officials; to secure a unity of action in law enforcement matters; to enhance the standards of police personnel, police training and police professionalism generally; to devise ways and means for equality of law enforcement throughout the state of Maine; to advance the prevention and detection of crime; to prescribe to the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics; and to promote the profession of law enforcement as an integral and dedicated force in today's society sworn to the protection of life and property.

This bill amends Maine's Criminal Code to provide that, on or after January 1, 2026, a person may not be sentenced to life in prison or for any term of years equivalent to imprisonment for life. Under this bill, "term of years equivalent to imprisonment for life" means a sentence of imprisonment for a term of years that, as determined by the court based on the age of the convicted person at the time of sentencing and other factors determined by the court, is reasonably expected to result in the imprisonment of the person for the remainder of the person's life.

Not quite two years ago, a man in Bowdoin murdered his parents and two of their friends and wounded three other people. He confessed to these horrific crimes and was sentenced to the maximum term of life in prison. These killings were committed within days of his being released from prison for unrelated crimes. This individual told a news outlet later that he was not in control of his actions at the time of the shootings and didn't understand why he did it.

In another recent Maine case, a man was convicted of shooting and killing two young adults. The defendant was sentenced to life in prison on two counts of knowing or intentional murder and five years in prison for the prohibited possession of a firearm. At the time of the sentencing, the prosecutor in the case stated, "This defendant cannot take two lives without expecting to spend the rest of his in prison."

We could not agree more.

These are just two examples that highlight why our judicial system must have every tool available to impose the harshest of sentences for those persons who have committed violent criminal acts. This is especially true for certain cases involving murder. Not only must these individuals be held accountable for their criminal offenses, but we must also ensure that those who have committed the most egregious crimes cannot harm others. Victims and their families deserve nothing less.

Some criminals who have committed dangerous violent crimes are unlikely to be rehabilitated, and there is a high probability of reoffending in the future. A life sentence ensures that these individuals remain incarcerated, keeping the public safe from those who are prone to cause additional harm to others.

For these reasons, we would ask you to oppose LD 1335 and vote ought not to pass on this bill.