

Steven Clark, #96645

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LD 1941: LD 1941 - An Act to Implement Recommendations of the Commission to Examine
Reestablishing Parole

Dear Senator Carter, Representative Kuhn, and the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Steven Clark and I am writing in support of LD1941, an act to establish reentry and reintegration into the community. I have worked diligently over the past 20 years to change my life, to atone for my past choices, to educate myself, and to give back to my community here at the Maine State Prison. Over the past 20 years, I have also worked with Restorative Justice and have visited with my victim's mother who is now a friend and mentor to me.

My path has shown me recovery and the importance of community and support. Through earning a master's degree, two bachelor degrees, certifications in substance abuse and mental health, and thanks to the MDOC and being able to start a PhD in Psychology, I have full time employment and a place to live. My job is at a behavioral health agency where I would get wrap-around services. Over my 20 years, I have expressed my blessings by giving back and now want to continue this on the outside world helping others in and leaving prison.

I write to you because I would be an asset in the community where I could contribute to my family and my victim's family. The professor and former president of the American Society of Criminology, Dr. Shadd Maruna, is my mentor and has written a letter of support on my behalf stating it is no longer in the interest of public safety to keep me incarcerated and also that I could contribute to the work of public safety and building a safer society if I was released.

There seems to be a breakdown between rehabilitation and opportunities for those of us with long sentences. If I am no longer a risk to public safety, why keep me locked up where I am a cost to tax payers? I am with several other men here who also would be an asset to the community, men who give themselves every day to helping others, and men who are educated. Providing parole would inspire others to follow the path of education, service, and restorative justice.

I am respectfully asking you to pass the parole bill, LD 1941, and provide hope, understanding and forgiveness to those of us who need it most. An eye for an eye mentality no longer serves our country. Instead love, forgiveness, and accountability do much more.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Respectfully,
Steven Clark