



MAINE ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYERS

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January 27, 2021

Senator Anne Carney
Representative Thom Harnett
Committee on Judiciary
100 State House Station, Room 438
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Introduction of Maine Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Harnett and Members of the Judiciary
Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce the Maine Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers to your Committee. For over 20 years now, MACDL has been appearing before the Judiciary Committee and other committees to address criminal law legislation, and we look forward to doing so in the coming legislative session.

MACDL was founded in 1992 to provide education, resources, lobbying, and a statewide voice on matters of importance to Maine criminal defense lawyers and the criminal justice system. MACDL's primary purpose and objectives are to promote the study and research in the field of criminal defense law, to promote the proper administration of justice, and to foster, maintain and encourage the integrity, independence, and expertise of the defense lawyer in criminal cases. We believe that our work over the past nearly 30 years has accomplished these purposes, but we are committed to this work for many years to come.

As I am sure you know, when we appear before your Committee, we are not appearing on behalf of defendants. Our role in testifying about bills is to provide the perspective of the impact of any legislative change on the rights of the accused. While nearly everyone in this room will likely never face a criminal charge, there is little question that each and every one of us has had some interaction with the criminal justice system as it relates to our friends, families, or people we know. All of us want to make sure that justice is fairly administered, and that when the State seeks to bring a criminal charge against someone we know or love, that the accused is given a fair shake. It simply cannot be any other way.

As experts in the criminal law process, we hope to provide each and every one of you this session with expertise in how the criminal law works and whether any change that is being proposed is a good change or a bad change. We have often worked together

with prosecutors and other stakeholders in legislation to make sure that whatever change is recommended is done so with respect for the rights of the accused. I am sure we will do so this session as well.

In the end, we are here to simply provide a perspective about the criminal justice process that would not otherwise be available.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear once again before you this session as MACDL has for a long time now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Walter F. McKee', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Walter F. McKee
Chair, Legislative Committee