



**SCHOLARS**  
STRATEGY NETWORK

## **Testimony Regarding LD 239: Directing the Department of Health and Human Services To Explore the Development of a Behavioral Health Unit at the Cumberland County Jail**

**Brooklin Jones**, University of Maine

I am here to state my support for LD 239...

At a federal level, 80% of inmates had either mental health or substance abuse problems. In, Maine, "Forty-one percent of state prisoners and 48% of jail inmates had both. ... Forty percent of prisoners take psychotropic medications (Tapley, 2018)." These rates have been estimated to be higher in Maine but can only be estimated because under some policies individuals need to have already had a diagnosis or medication prior to being there (Ricker, 2016). As a future practitioner, I believe all individuals have the right to treatment.