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STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

June 19, 2019

Commissioner Jeanne M. Lambrew
Department of Health and Human Services
11 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Commissioner Lambrew,

This session, the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services considered LD 964, Resolve, To Study Housing Options for Mental Health Challenges and Substance Use Disorder. In its consideration of this bill, the Committee heard that the Department of Health and Human Services is working with outside entities such as the PEW Charitable Trusts to review and make recommendations related to the behavioral health continuum in Maine. The Committee supports this initiative by the Department.

In addition, the Committee requests that the Department convene a stakeholder group that includes the Department of Corrections, Maine Sheriffs' Association and the Maine Statewide Homeless Council to assess the housing needs of persons who are living with mental health challenges or who have substance use disorder, particularly the needs of persons in rural areas of the State. The Committee requests that the stakeholder group explore methods of expanding the options and availability of housing for persons living with mental health challenges or who have substance use disorder.

Please report back to this Committee by February 15, 2020 on the results of the review of the behavioral health continuum and on the work and recommendations of the stakeholder group. Thank you for your attention to these important matters.

Sincerely,

Sen. Geoffrey M. Gratwick
Senate Chair

Rep. Patricia Hymanson
House Chair

cc: Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Randall A. Liberty, Commissioner, Department of Corrections
Anna Black, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Department of Corrections
Molly Bogart, Government Relations Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Sheriff Kevin Joyce, President, Maine Sheriffs' Association
Stephanie Primm, Chair, Maine Statewide Homeless Council
Bill sponsor: Representative Beebe-Center