



# Administrative Office of the Courts

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## **Judicial Branch testimony in support of LD 1073, Resolve, to Implement an Intensive Drug Treatment Court Pilot Project in the Midcoast**

Senator Carpenter, Representative Bailey, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name is Julie Finn and I represent the Judicial Branch. I testify in favor of LD 1073 which will fund the creation of an integrated drug treatment court pilot project in the mid-coast area.

The difference between a regular Drug Treatment Court and an Integrated or Intensive Drug Treatment Court is the level of services provided. Most Drug Court participants are in need of a wide range of additional support services such as housing, job skill development, education and often, child care, in order to sustain their recovery and promote their reintegration into the community.

About one year ago, this pilot project was recommended by Chief Justice Saufley in her State of the Judiciary speech. She stated that: "This would be a first-of-its-kind in Maine project. It would include immediate and extensive access to addiction treatment, mental health treatment, comprehensive case management, testing, sober housing, job training, employment assistance, transportation, family-related services, and long-term follow-up."

Since that time, as is required to initiate a new treatment court, resources and social services have been identified in the mid-coast area to support an integrated treatment court. The Judicial Branch has worked with DHHS in developing cost

estimates for the various necessary services. I will provide an updated list of services and costs at the work session.

In addition, local judges and attorneys are supportive of the project, as is the mid-coast legislative delegation. In fact, most of the legislative delegation are sponsors or co-sponsors of this bill.

Any new pilot project must include appropriate tools for measuring and assessing the success, or lack of success, of the pilot. This is of critical importance to future policymakers who will be tasked with deciding what resources should be directed toward the program. We are pleased that an evaluation component is included in the proposal for the Mid-Coast Integrated Drug Treatment Court.

The Judicial Branch does have one concern in this regard. The proposal calls for 10 participants. It is generally accepted best practice to have 25 participants in order to compare the results and effectiveness with like programs. It is our hope that the program can be appropriately funded to allow 25 people to participate for the two-year span of the IDTC.

This proposal is not inexpensive, but, as the Chief Justice said, “the long-term consequences of failing to find an answer to this crisis are beyond measuring.”

Thank you for your time. The Judicial Branch looks forward to working with you on this important proposal.