



## Testimony Regarding LD 1171: An Act to Prevent Sexual and Domestic Violence and Support Survivors

**Brooklin Jones**, University of Maine

Sexual assault will affect 1 in 4 women and 1 in 5 men in their lifetime. In Maine, it is estimated around 14,000 individuals will experience sexual assault or violence every year (MECASA, 2018). This number can only be estimated because not every survivor will have a rape kit done or report it to the authorities, as is their right. This number can only be estimated because of the retraumatization it is to tell the chain of events repeatedly under scrutiny. This number can only be estimated because the burden is on the survivor. I once saw a protester with a sign reading, "Everyone knows someone who has been raped, but no one knows someone who is a rapist." This might be due to individuals not wanting to associate themselves with a perpetrator or offender. Moreover, it is due to perpetrators or offenders not being held accountable for their actions because of the burden of proof, the intimate nature of the crime, and the time sensitivity. Only 5 in every 1000 offenders and perpetrators will end up in prison (RAINN, 2019).