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LD 1159

I am a faculty member at the University of Southern Maine and one of my major areas of scholarship is drug policy reform. I am writing you today in strong support of LD 1159: An Act to Establish a Pilot Project Regarding Harm Reduction Health Centers (sponsored by Rep. Laurie Osher). As you know, the bill would create a two-year pilot program to establish harm reduction health centers. It is clear from the research from Canada and Western Europe that community-based resource centers that offer both supervised safe consumption and other disease-prevention and recovery-assistance services dramatically reduce overdose deaths and disease transmission. New York has recently opened a center like this and other states are moving in that direction (including Rhode Island which just passed legislation to allow the creation of these sorts of centers). Over 700 people died in our state of drug overdoses last year alone. This is a health crisis. I urge you to act by supporting LD 1159.