

Jon Courtney
Cape Elizabeth
LD 1159

Testimony in favor of LD 1159

Monday, April 10th, 2023

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

My name is Jon Courtney, a resident of Cape Elizabeth and I am writing to express my support for LD 1159: An Act to Establish Pilot Project Regarding Harm Reduction Health Centers. I am a parent and a long-time resident of Maine and believe we should be offering protective and connective measures for those struggling with substance use and believe this bill offered an avenue to increase safety and mitigate the losses felt by those struggling with addiction.

Last year, Maine lost 716 people to overdose, a tragic record that highlights the ongoing urgency of the opioid epidemic that continues to ravage our state. Current efforts are clearly inadequate in addressing the breadth of the situation and it is time for Maine to stand amongst global leaders in harm reduction and pilot a program to help reduce the impact of substance use upon our citizens.

Overdose prevention sites offer a safe harbor for those in our community who use drugs, to find protection and oversight and help to mitigate the onslaught of overdose deaths. Other pilot programs around the world have demonstrated that connection and community provide greater safety and help reduce the shame and stigma associated with unsupervised usage. I believe a pilot program to examine the potential effectiveness of a center here in Maine would provide both an impactful opportunity to save lives.

I hope you will consider supporting this measure. Thank you for your work and thoughtfulness around this issue. I hope you will join in supporting LD1159.

Sincerely,
Jon Courtney
Cape Elizabeth, Maine