

Testimony in Support of LD 1159
“An Act to Establish a Pilot Project Regarding Harm Reduction Health Centers”

Hello Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Scott Harriman and I am writing in support of LD 1159, “An Act to Establish a Pilot Project Regarding Harm Reduction Health Centers.”

Maine is experiencing an epidemic of substance use disorder, with hundreds of our family members, friends, and neighbors dying every year of accidental overdoses. Establishing more harm reduction centers will help save lives by providing a place for people to use substances in a safer manner.

These centers are not simply places to use substances under supervision. They also provide drug checking, which helps reduce risk by screening for fentanyl or other adulterants; healthcare services, including testing for communicable diseases; and access to treatment and recovery resources.

People with substance use disorder will continue to use substances whether or not they have access to a harm reduction center. The difference is that having more of these centers will result in fewer needles on the ground, fewer public or unattended overdoses, lower costs for municipalities by reducing the number of emergency calls, and – most importantly – fewer of our loved ones dying.

Please vote Ought To Pass on LD 1159. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

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