

Eric "Joe" Finnemore
machias
LD 1596

My name is Eric J Finnemore. I am from Aroostook County and I am in support of LD1596, bringing Treatment Court Services to Aroostook County Maine. We are in the grips of a severe public health crisis with addiction running strong in our communities. We have an obligation to our State to promote public wellness and we fail to do that by sending people to prison who suffer from the disease of addiction for symptoms of their disease. I am a Treatment Court graduate. I have also been to prison for drug possession and trafficking. I will tell you firsthand that prison wasn't fun. It also didn't treat my disease. I was told I had a 76% chance of reoffending when I was released. Basically they told me I would be back again. July 24, 2020 I was charged with possession of a small amount of scheduled drugs while on probation. A ticket back to prison. But I was offered a chance at Treatment Court in Washington County instead of prison and I agreed to sign the contract to enter the program. The program is designed to be challenging and accepting of those who might struggle with fighting their addictions, by having different treatment responses and sanctions for every situation that may be faced. Even termination if it comes to new criminal activity while in the program. The programming that I went through in this program has changed my life. After completing I.O.P. (intensive outpatient program) I was introduced to M.R.T. (moral reconnection therapy), a step work guide that has taught me how I've manipulated everyone and everything in my life to keep me from reaching my full potential. Since my graduation in July of 2022 I have gone on to become employed at AMHC as the Recovery Support Navigator. I am a trusted member of the community and employed through the agency that helped me break the cycle of revisiting prison because of symptoms of my disease. Programming and therapy work. I am proof of that. This program has offered me hope that I can be more than just another hopeless person who will die in addiction. I love being a mentor and a sober support for the people of my community and being able to offer hope to someone who feels hopeless. I support LD1596 and Treatment Court for Aroostook County.