



## CITY OF BANGOR

### Joint Standing Committee on Taxation

#### **Testimony in support of LD 1714 – “An Act to Create a Sustainable Funding Source for Recovery Community Centers Using a Percentage of the Adult Use Cannabis Tax Revenue”**

May 1, 2023

Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation, my name is Patricia Hamilton, Public Health Director of The City of Bangor, and I’m providing testimony on behalf of the Bangor City Council in support of LD 1714, An Act to Create a Sustainable Funding Source for Recovery Community Centers Using a Percentage of the Adult Use Cannabis Tax Revenue.

The recovery community center model has proven to be effective in the greater Bangor Area. In Bangor, the Together Place Peer Run Recovery Center empowers adults in mental health or substance use recovery to take leadership in their own lives. Their peer-run recovery groups and community based programs have proven effective in supporting those challenged by mental illness and substance use disorder. Across the river in Brewer, the Bangor Area Recovery Network’s (BARN) mission to provide peer-based services, education, outreach, and advocacy has proven highly effective. They offer a safe haven for those seeking recovery, their loved ones, and their communities.

Due in large part to the success of these entities, the City of Bangor believes strongly in the effectiveness of recovery communities that provide nonclinical, peer recovery support services such as support groups, recovery coaching, skill building groups, outreach programs, and the like. The research supports these experiences as well. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, “while the body of research is still growing, there is mounting evidence that people receiving peer recovery coaching show reductions in substance use, improvements on a range of recovery outcomes, or both.”

The Together Place and the BARN, like most peer run recovery programs across Maine, often struggle to make ends meet. They rely heavily on grants and donations, neither of which are reliable sources of funding. Dedicating a percentage of the adult use cannabis tax revenue to recovery community centers would be a step in the right direction. This dedicated source of revenue will allow them to focus on what they do best – supporting individuals on their journey to recovery.

With the full support of the Bangor City Council, I urge you to pass LD 1714. Thank you for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to reach out with questions.

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