

**Testimony in Favor of LD 1714:
An Act To Create a Sustainable Funding Source for Recovery Community Centers**

Committee on Taxation
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Justin Reid
Portland, ME 04103

Re: LD 1714

May 3, 2023

Dear Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation,

My name is Justin Reid, and I am a Portland resident. I identify as a person in recovery from substance use disorder (SUD). What that means to me is that I have abstained from the use of drugs and alcohol since December 8, 2014. I am speaking to you today in favor of passing LD 1714.

The story of my substance use can be summarized as a 17-year period that included the progression of unhealthy behavior, consequences (legal and otherwise) and isolation from others. My 30th birthday was spent in a rehabilitation program, followed by a year of going back and forth between abstinence-based recovery and active substance use.

In early 2015, I was introduced to the full spectrum of recovery community resources in Portland, Maine. This included living in a recovery residence, attending mutual aid support meetings and being introduced to the Portland Recovery Community Center (PRCC).

It quickly became clear to me that the PRCC was a unique and special place. From the moment I was greeted by a volunteer at the front desk to departure, the space felt safe and welcoming. This was the complete opposite of the places I had been subjecting myself to in the years previous. Whether talking to staff or the members of the center, my recovery was being supported by others who could relate, through their own experience.

The factors of an internal desire to recover, some willingness to act on that desire, and the support of peers in my community helped me to create a solid foundation in recovery. Once the foundation started to form, the importance of giving back became clear and this had been demonstrated by folks that had been at the center formally volunteering or showing up as a member and taking the time to have healthy and motivating conversation with others.

Recovery Community Centers (RCCs), like the PRCC, provide a low barrier support to those in or seeking recovery. I have witnessed the many miracles take place within the walls and I know that many more have the opportunity to happen, as long as it exists. Mainers from every part of the state should be given the opportunity of recovery with the support of RCCs.

I thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify, and I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Justin Reid