

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

My name is Michael Beck and I am a resident of Bangor. I am writing in support of LD1714, An Act to Create a Sustainable Funding Source for Recovery Community Centers Using a Percentage of the Adult Use Cannabis Tax Revenue.

I am not a person in recovery myself, but I have witnessed the power and impact of recovery community centers in my community. A few months ago, I was invited to the Bangor Area Recovery Network (BARN) to observe a Fresh Start Sober Living members meeting. These are people who either currently live or formerly lived in sober housing and participate in recovery activities at the BARN. They come from all walks of life and backgrounds. Some are young, some are old, some are veterans, some are parents, and some are students. They are my neighbors and my friends.

As I listened to their stories, I was amazed by their courage and resilience. They shared how they struggled with substance use disorder, how they lost everything they cared about, how they hit rock bottom. They also shared how they found hope and healing at the BARN, how they received peer support and coaching, how they learned new skills and hobbies, how they rebuilt their lives and relationships. They expressed their gratitude and pride for being part of the recovery community. They inspired me with their determination and optimism.

I realized that these are people who could have died from overdose or suicide. These are people who could have ended up in jail or homeless. These are people who could have been forgotten or ignored by society. But because of the BARN, they are alive and thriving. They are contributing and belonging. They are making a difference and setting an example.

The BARN works. The greater Bangor area is better because of the BARN. Recovery community centers work. Maine needs to give recovery community centers the support and resources they need to carry out this very important mission.

That is why I urge you to support LD1714, which would create a sustainable funding source for recovery community centers by using a percentage of the adult use cannabis tax revenue. This bill would ensure that recovery community centers can continue to provide vital services and support to people in recovery and their families. It would reduce the reliance on grants and donations, which are often unpredictable and insufficient to meet the demand for recovery services.

I urge you to vote in favor of LD1714 and help save lives and strengthen communities. Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully,  
Michael Beck  
Bangor