

Patricia A. Kimball
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Good Morning Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry and the members of the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation. I am here today to testify in favor 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.

My name is Pat Kimball and I am a resident of Hermon and retired after working in the field of prevention, treatment and recovery for over 30 years. If you google the work Sanctuary you will see the definition is a place where people who are in danger seek safe harbor or haven. Recovery Centers are a sanctuary to hundreds of people who are seeking support for their recovery from substance use disorders. In 2017 Maine had two recovery centers and under Governor Mills leadership and her commitment to recovery in 2023 we now have 17 recovery centers located all over the state. Her commitment is remarkable and I am grateful she has the vision to understand how these centers create a place of hope and recovery. My fear is when her term is complete someone with her vision will not be in her place and along with that will go the funding to support these centers. Without financial help these centers cannot do their work. This bill will secure that centers will be able to get the financial support they need to continue offering a safe and caring recovery community center.

If you have not visited a Recovery Center, I would encourage you to do so. As I shared, I have worked in the field of substance use disorders for over 30 years and have been part of many programs but from the moment I walked into the Bangor Area Recovery Network affectionally called the BARN I could feel this sense of hope and caring that was within those walls. When you walk into the center you are not judged, you are greeted with a smile, and "how can I help you" The work in recovery centers is done by an army of volunteers who do every thing from Recovery Coaching, offering space for self help groups, sponsor educational sessions, helping with employment or simply offering just a hug. There is no payment required to come into a center accept to be respectful and to be a part of our community. If you have a recovery center in your area, consider yourself fortunate.

On any given day in the centers, you will see things like reaching out helping others, attending self-help group, sharing over coffee, learning how to apply for a job, getting support for having a not so good day or a place to share how many days you are clean. Center is about support, caring and help. Treatment is important and we need to ensure that people have access to treatment but recovery is the journey to regain happiness, self-respect and put the joy back into your life. Having a place where you can share your struggle, strength and hope is essential in saving lives.

I would encourage you to invest financially in Recovery Centers. By passing this bill you secure this funding so we can continue to save lives and create health communities. Please let me know if you have any question, I would be happy to share. Thank you for your time.

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Hermon
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