

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

Catherine Clough-Bell, LADC, CCS
Lakes Region Recovery Center
Bridgton, ME 04009

RE: LD 1714

May 9th, 2023

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

My name is Catherine Clough-Bell, LADC, CCS. I have been in the substance use disorder treatment profession for 26+ years. Over the course of the last 15 years, those of us in the treatment profession have witnessed substance use disorders become increasingly prevalent and deadly. I am also the Founder of the Lakes Region Recovery Center which opened just over 5 years ago in Bridgton. Bridgton is a rural town located in the heart of the Lakes Region of Western Maine, in Cumberland County.

Since the Lakes Region Recovery Center has opened, it has forged relationships throughout the community, providing a safe and welcoming place for people with substance use and mental health disorders. People are able to socialize without fear of discrimination, or stigma related language. The Lakes Region Recovery Center provides recovery coaches that are integrated into treatment services in our community, as well as providing recovery coaches to our local Hospital ED. NARCAN is available for distribution at the Recovery Center, and the Hospital ED, with patients being provided a packet of resources for them to get help. NARCAN trainings continue to be offered throughout the community, including the local high school. We were welcomed at the local farmers market where resource information and NARCAN is offered. I have firsthand experienced the gratitude of community members for the services the Recovery Center provides, with one local official stating that perhaps if these services were around when her brother was alive, he might still be alive today and he might have gotten help. These services had previously been non-existent, and it is doubtful that without this Recovery Center they would be offered. I fear that without a more sustainable funding stream for Maine Recovery Centers, communities will greatly suffer.

Passing LD1714 will allow for an increase in staffing that Maine Recovery Centers desperately need and will provide Maine Recovery Centers with a more permanent and sustainable funding stream for the years to come. As they say, it takes a village and we need our Maine Recovery Centers with us in this fight. I beg, plead, and urge you to pass LD1714.

I thank the committee for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Catherine Clough-Bell, LADC, CCS
Lakes Region Recovery Center
Bridgton, ME 04009

