

Christopher Cayer
Eustis
LD 1975

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and Respected Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

I am a person in long-term recovery from Opioid Use Disorder. After a decade of active use, I sought recovery in 2015. At the time, I searched for weeks, making dozens of calls to find available treatment. Despite an exhaustive search, I was forced to travel out of state and spend thousands of dollars to get help.

Since 2015, overdose deaths in Maine have continued to rise. The opioid crisis is an epidemic that requires a robust and urgent response. The response by the state of Maine, however, has been underwhelming. Recent research reveals that around 17,000 Mainers are actively seeking treatment for substance use disorders, yet are unable to access it.

Last year, I assisted my brother and his partner while they desperately searched for treatment options in Maine. I was discouraged to find that the availability of treatment had not changed since 2015. We were told that we would have to spend thousands of dollars and either travel out of state or wait for several months to access in-patient care.

Treatment options are so limited in this state that it's common for people to spend months on a wait list. For people with Substance Use Disorder, the decision to seek treatment is a difficult choice and requires an immediate response. For the most extreme cases, people like myself and my brother, three months could be the difference between life and death.

We need an urgent and robust response to the overdose crisis. LD 1975 would implement a statewide public health response to the Substance Use epidemic. I urge you to please support LD 1975. Let's work together to build a healthier future for our community!

Chris Cayer
Eustis