



Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine
The unified voice for Maine's community behavioral health providers

Malory Otteson Shaughnessy, Executive Director

Testimony in Support of L.D. 353
**“An Act Concerning Substance Use Disorder, Treatment,
Recovery, Prevention and Education”**

Sponsored by Senator Farrin
1.24.2024

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Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Charlotte Warren, I am a resident of Hallowell, and I'm here today on behalf of the Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services. The Alliance is the statewide association representing the majority of Maine's community-based providers of these much-needed services, providing care annually to over 80,000 Maine men, women, and children. The Alliance advocates for the implementation of sound policies and evidence-based practices that serve to enhance the quality and effectiveness of our behavioral health care system.

On behalf of the Alliance and the thousands of families that they serve, I am here today to speak in support of L.D. 353 “An Act Concerning Substance Use Disorder, Treatment, Recovery, Prevention and Education.” As members of the Health and Human Services Committee, you have had a front row seat to witness the profound impact of substance use disorders on individuals, families, and communities in our state. The study proposed in this legislation will provide valuable insights into the current state of SUD treatment in Maine. By examining key aspects such as accessibility, effectiveness, and available resources, the findings will guide next steps in making informed decisions to enhance and optimize the state's approach to substance use disorder treatment.

Substance use disorders are complex, and a comprehensive analysis should be used to map the assets and deficits of our SUD response in Maine. As you as policymakers decide what programs receive funding and how much, you should have information on what programming is effective, and if we have enough of it.

The Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future is well-positioned to lead this effort, leveraging its expertise and resources to bring about positive change in the landscape of SUD treatment in Maine. Collaborative efforts between government agencies, healthcare providers, advocacy groups, the community and persons with lived experience are essential to creating a more resilient and responsive SUD treatment system.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue. Please vote to support the study proposed in LD 353. I am happy to answer any questions.