

25+ Years of *Independent Practice* as Healthcare Providers for the People of Maine

January 21, 2024

Members of the Committee on Labor and Housing

I am a citizen from South Portland and work as a nurse practitioner in primary care in the greater Portland area. I am writing to you on behalf of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association in support of L.D. 353 – An Act Concerning Substance Use Disorder, Treatment, Recovery, Prevention, and Education.

We believe that addressing the challenges posed by substance use disorder is crucial for the well-being of our communities, and this bill represents a significant step forward in that direction.

The multifaceted approach outlined in L.D. 353 demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the complex nature of substance use disorder. By focusing on treatment, recovery, prevention, and education, this legislation acknowledges the need for a holistic strategy to combat the impacts of substance abuse on individuals and society.

Access to treatment needs to be expanded and it is essential to ensure that individuals struggling with substance use disorder have timely and adequate access to the support and resources they need to embark on the path to recovery. Implementing a set of health care site and clinician-specific interventions in emergency rooms, hospitals, and primary care offices can decrease drug overdose deaths, improve treatment of substance use disorders and overall health of our communities.

Moreover, the preventative measures proposed in the bill, coupled with educational initiatives, have the potential to address the root causes of substance use disorder. By raising awareness and providing resources for prevention and early detection and intervention, we can work towards creating an environment that reduces the likelihood of individuals succumbing to the challenges of addiction.

Sustained recovery is not only about overcoming the immediate challenges of substance use but also about building a foundation for a healthier and more stable future. The provisions in this bill that support long-term recovery efforts are essential for breaking the cycle of addiction.

In conclusion, we urge you to lend your support to L.D. 353 and contribute to the advancement of a more compassionate and effective approach to addressing substance use disorder in our state. By endorsing this legislation, we can work together towards building a healthier, more resilient Maine.

Thank you for your time and dedication to the well-being of our community. I appreciate your consideration of this important matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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Legislative Committee Member

Maine Nurse Practitioner Association