

Elizabeth Alteri
Ellsworth
LD 2214

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee and Members of the Taxation Committee,

My name is Elizabeth Alteri, and I am the Coordinator for INSPIRE Recovery Center in Ellsworth. We opened as a recovery center in September of 2021, and we serve an average of 30 people a day. From the day we opened, people in the recovery community have told us how needed this recovery community center was for our area. Being in Hancock County, the number of recovery support services are limited, and limited is even a stretch.

In just two short years, we have helped countless people connect to detox, rehab facilities and sober living (outside of our immediate area, because none of these exist in our county), facilitated dozens of calls with Maine Crisis services, hosted meals in which community members and people in recovery get to know each other, trained dozens of community members on using Naloxone, and have helped community members find stable housing. Our center is less than a quarter of a mile from the Hancock County Jail and oftentimes INSPIRE is the first stop people make upon release, giving people a positive first interaction after release and offering them a judgment free place to start again.

I'm a mother of three, ages 14, 11 and 7. My kids absolutely love it at INSPIRE. When I pick them up from school, the first thing they ask is if we are going to the center. The relationships they have built with people in recovery, I'm sure is going to impact them in the future. Maybe it will impact them in regards to prevention, maybe if they end up needing recovery support they won't be afraid of the stigma of reaching out for help. They are learning to accept and love people where they are at. They understand that there are good people in tough places and the more services that exist in our communities, the better the future of our state will be. My children are not the only ones that benefit from their time at the center. They are making real connections with people.

I can't even imagine our community without our recovery community center. When people are struggling to stay sober, they come to INSPIRE. When they are preparing for visits with their children, they come to INSPIRE. When they are feeling defeated because things in court didn't go their way, they come to INSPIRE. When they want to recover but are not sure where to start, they come to INSPIRE. When they need to feel cared for, supported and accepted without judgment, they come to INSPIRE. Everyone deserves to have that, and without RCCs all of those people in the above situations and so many more, would not have a place to go. We need to know there is a sustainable way to keep the doors open and the lights on would remind those who utilize RCCs that it isn't just the staff and volunteers at these centers that are there pulling for them, but that our state supports them as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Elizabeth Alteri
Coordinator
INSPIRE Recovery Center