

3/11/25

Senator Henry Ingwersen – Chair

Representative Michele Meyer - Chair

Committee On Health and Human Services

100 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Senator Ingwersen and Representative Meyer:

I am writing to you as an addiction medicine physician with over 20 years of experience practicing in Portland. I strongly oppose LD219 which seeks to limit syringe service programs (SSPs) ability to care for members of our community who inject drugs. I appreciate the intent behind LD 219 which is to limit needle and syringe waste in our communities. Unfortunately, the science does not back up returning to a one to one exchange rate. What we do know is that limiting access to sterile injection supplies increases the risk of significant infectious complications including transmission of hepatitis B and C as well as HIV. The recent HIV outbreak in Bangor should serve as a reminder of how critical it is for individuals not to share injection supplies.

Rather than go backward to a one to one exchange, we should be supporting efforts to promote innovative ways to educate and influence individuals who use drugs to safely dispose of their supplies.

I hope this committee will join me in opposing LD 219.

*Kristen Silvia MD*

Kristen Silvia MD

Freeport ME