

Joshua Bradstreet  
Presque Isle  
LD 420

Testimony in Support of An Act to Fund the Carleton Project to Provide Additional Access to a Nontraditional Secondary School

By: Joshua Sean Bradstreet

Honorable Members of the Legislature,

My name is Joshua Sean Bradstreet, and I am living proof of the profound impact that the Carleton Project can have on a young person's life. Without this school, I wouldn't be here testifying today—not just because I wouldn't have earned an education, but because I likely wouldn't have survived my teenage years at all.

Growing up, my life was filled with instability. I struggled with drug use, probation, suspension, and ultimately expulsion from traditional high school. The rigid structure of the public school system didn't work for me—I felt like a failure, like I wasn't meant to succeed. The path I was on was leading me toward destruction, not a future.

Then, I found the Carleton Project.

At a time when the world was ready to write me off, the Carleton Project gave me a second chance. It provided an environment that wasn't just about academics—it was about understanding, patience, and individualized support. It was the first time in my life that I felt like my education was built for me, not against me.

The Carleton Project didn't just teach me subjects—it taught me how to believe in myself. It gave me a space where I wasn't just another student falling through the cracks. They saw potential in me when I couldn't see it in myself, and they nurtured that potential until I was strong enough to stand on my own.

Because of the Carleton Project, I turned my life around. I didn't just earn my education—I built a future.

I went on to become a nurse, dedicating myself to helping others in their most vulnerable moments.

I now work as an adult crisis counselor, guiding people who are struggling—just like I once was.

I have a family, a career, and a life I never thought possible when I was a lost teenager.

But none of that would have happened without this school.

For students like me, the traditional school system isn't always the right fit. But that doesn't mean we don't deserve an education. It doesn't mean we should be left behind. The Carleton Project provides a critical lifeline for students who need a different approach—one that recognizes that learning isn't one-size-fits-all.

If you invest in funding the Carleton Project, you are investing in kids like me—kids who just need another way, another chance. And if my story proves anything, it's that when you give a struggling student the right support, they can do more than survive. They can thrive.

I urge you to pass this bill. The Carleton Project didn't just change my life—it saved it. Let's make sure it can continue to do the same for others.

Thank you.