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To the Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed rollback of Maine's Good Samaritan Law, which I believe has been instrumental in saving lives and fostering a compassionate response to those suffering from substance use disorder (SUD).

My daughter tragically lost her life to an overdose in 2014, an experience that has fundamentally shaped my advocacy work. Since her death, I have dedicated myself to raising awareness and fighting stigma surrounding those affected by SUD. I am a firm believer in a public health approach to substance use, rather than relying on punitive criminal justice measures. In my work, I have connected with dozens of individuals and families from all walks of life across Maine, each with their own stories of pain and resilience.

What I have consistently witnessed in these communities is the profound impact of fear of legal consequences on individuals' willingness to seek help during overdose situations. The Good Samaritan Law was a critical step toward addressing this fear. I have heard countless stories, both from people who have struggled with SUD and from those who have lost loved ones, where the law's protections have directly led to lives being saved. The law encourages people to call 911, knowing they will not face arrest or prosecution for seeking help during an overdose. This change has been nothing short of transformative.

Anecdotally, I have heard too many families and individuals in Maine refer to tragic overdose deaths with the phrase, "That was before the Good Samaritan Laws." This statement carries profound weight. It reflects a consensus among those most directly impacted by this crisis: the period before the law was enacted was marked by fear and hesitation to seek the help that could have saved lives. The tragic losses were occurring before we had the strong protections that the Good Samaritan Law provides today.

The Good Samaritan Law is a compassionate, common-sense solution that has given people the courage to intervene in life-or-death situations. Rolling back this law would send the wrong message: that fear of legal consequences should once again dictate life-saving decisions. The people who know the pain of losing a loved one to overdose and those on the front lines of this crisis—our families, communities, and service providers—agree that the law as it stands is critical. It helps save lives and reduces the stigma that prevents people from seeking help when they need it most.

I urge you to reject any efforts to roll back the Good Samaritan Law. It is a vital tool that allows us to address the opioid crisis in Maine with compassion, understanding, and a public health approach. Repealing it would be a step backward, and I am deeply concerned that such a decision will result in more unnecessary deaths.

Thank you for your time and consideration.