



Testimony in Opposition of LD 1024

March 31, 2025

My name is Maddy, and I am a community outreach specialist at the Bangor Area Recovery Network (BARN). I am here today to express my strong opposition to LD 1024, which seeks to expand the list of crimes that do not qualify for immunity under Maine's Good Samaritan Law.

The current Good Samaritan Law exists to save lives. It was designed to ensure that individuals feel safe calling for emergency medical assistance during a drug-related overdose without the fear of legal repercussions. Expanding the list of disqualifying crimes undermines the very purpose of this law and will only deter people from seeking life-saving help.

As someone working on the front lines of recovery, I have witnessed the devastating impact of overdose deaths. Many individuals in active addiction avoid calling 911 out of fear of arrest or prosecution. Removing or weakening the existing protections will only increase hesitation, resulting in more preventable deaths.

Furthermore, penalizing individuals in crisis by limiting immunity will disproportionately affect marginalized and vulnerable populations. Substance use disorder is a public health issue, not a criminal one. Instead of expanding criminal consequences, we should focus on promoting access to harm reduction resources, treatment, and recovery support.

I also speak from personal experience. My sister lost her life to an overdose in 2016. If Narcan and laws like the Good Samaritan Act had been more accessible and effective at the time, she might still be here today. We cannot afford to create more barriers to saving lives.

I urge you to prioritize compassion, safety, and the dignity of human life by opposing LD 1024. We need to foster trust in public health systems, not fear of punishment, to combat the overdose crisis effectively.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Madison Valle

Madison Valle
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Bangor Area Recovery Network (BARN)