

May 1, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Michael R. Deslauriers and I live in Sabattus. I am writing to testify in favor LD 1425, An Act to Improve Access to Sustainable and Low-barrier Trauma Recovery Services.

My son Michael R Deslauriers II lost his life during the mass shooting at Just-in-Time bowling alley in Lewiston. That is the polite way to describe it, but the truth is he was slaughtered. His blood splattered on the walls, and he was left lying on the floor drowning on his own blood. He and his friend Jason Walker didn't run from the fire, they ran at it. They are being called heroes because they kept the shooter occupied for 16 seconds which gave God only knows how many people a chance to escape. Mike took five rounds of 7.62 (3.08) before he succumbed. Jason was shot twice, the first in his leg and the second in his face which killed him instantly. Both boys' DNA was all over the gun and the shooter, so they almost did it.

As you may know there is a bill SP 581 LD 1425 requesting funds for the Resiliency Center in Lewiston. The movement is called "Lewiston Strong" but the catastrophe stole the lives and inflicted lifelong pain on many people in outlying towns i.e., Sabattus.

Kathi, Jason's wife and Stacy, Mike's wife, was at the bowling alley and were crouched down as the spent casings bounced past them. Three things have kept them going, the love they got from both families, the friendship and respect they have for one another and their involvement with the Resilience Center.

Quite a while after the tragedy my wife talked me into going to a group session with her. I can simply say it saved my life. Time does not heal this wound. My life is over as I know it. At this point I don't think I could go on without my advocates and friends at the Resiliency Center.

Being at the Resiliency Center and seeing for myself the loved ones suffering with their unfathomable misery and yet finding the place where they can be at some peace makes me feel that it's my duty to ask you to vote in favor of this bill.

Sincerely yours,

Michael R. Deslauriers