

**Testimony in Support of LD 1328:
An Act to Create Housing and Recovery Services for LGBTQIA+ Individuals**

Senator Curry, Representative Gere, and Honorable Members of the Housing & Economic Development Committee,

My name is Laurence Anne Coe and I am a resident of Rockland. I am here today to voice my strong support for LD 1328, a key piece of legislation that will establish three recovery residences specifically designed to serve LGBTQIA+ individuals recovering from substance use disorder (SUD). As someone who has long supported individuals in recovery – having worked as a mentor with the Restorative Justice Project in the past, supporting the establishment of a recovery residence in my immediate neighborhood and advocating for the Midcoast Recovery Center – I have seen firsthand the challenges LGBTQIA+ individuals face when seeking safe recovery spaces.

Although some recovery residences are open to serving LGBTQIA+ individuals, they may not have the resources or peer support structures necessary to meet the needs of this community. Bias and lack of tailored services can deter LGBTQIA+ individuals from accessing life-saving recovery support. It's hard enough for someone dealing with SUD crisis to seek support even without facing extra obstacles.

LD 1328 will ensure that at least three certified recovery residences in different-sized localities are led and governed by LGBTQIA+ individuals in recovery. These residences will not only provide central living and meeting spaces but also specialized peer-led services that foster a supportive, affirming environment. This investment is critical to ensuring that all Mainers, regardless of identity, have equitable access to recovery resources that meet their needs, something every Mainer deserves and all Mainers should support.

We are losing too many Mainers to SUD and too often because safe and supportive recovery spaces are not available. In my immediate neighborhood, I personally know two young men whose families lost them to SUD-related suicide in recent years. It is even harder for LGBTQIA+ individuals to find supportive recovery.

In the Talmud, the central text of Judaism, it is stated in tractate Sanhedrin that “Whoever saves a life, it is as if he saved an entire world.” LD 1328 offers life-saving solutions to address the specific challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ Mainers, and I urge this committee to support this essential legislation.

I thank you again for your time and would be willing to answer any questions.

Sincerely,
Laurence Anne Coe
Resident of Rockland