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**Testimony in Favor of LD 1328:
An Act to Create Housing and Recovery Services for LGBTQIA+ Individuals**
on behalf of Portland Recovery Community Center

May 6, 2025

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

My name is Catherine Rawson, and I serve as the Communications & Outreach Coordinator at the Portland Recovery Community Center (PRCC). Our mission at PRCC is to provide support, education, resources, and advocacy for people recovering from and affected by addiction, and to spread the message of hope throughout the state of Maine and beyond. I am here today on behalf of PRCC to express our strong support for LD 1328, which would establish three certified recovery residences specifically designed to support LGBTQIA+ individuals recovering from substance use disorder (SUD).

As someone who moved to Maine in 2010 to live in a recovery residence, and who has since worked in treatment and recovery support for over a decade, I know how essential it is to have a safe, supportive, and affirming environment for those in early recovery. LD 1328 provides a targeted solution by establishing the LGBTQIA+ Recovery Residence Fund to provide critical and sustainable resources.

Why is this critical? At PRCC, we made referrals for 1,600 people seeking housing within the past year. Of the 90+ recovery residences certified by the Maine Association of Recovery Residences (MARR), only 13 report specifically serving LGBTQIA+ individuals.¹ And while some recovery residences are open to LGBTQIA+ individuals, most lack the peer leadership, training, and structural support necessary to truly meet the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community.

LGBTQIA+ individuals are at significantly higher risk for substance use disorder, and substance use disorder is already one of the most stigmatized health conditions.² Unfortunately, LGBTQIA+ individuals in Maine often face compounded stigma and a lack of culturally competent housing, which can deter them from accessing life-saving resources. LD 1328 acknowledges these realities and takes meaningful steps to create inclusive, affirming spaces where people can recover.

By supporting this bill, you can help ensure that every Mainer, regardless of identity, has access to recovery housing that is safe, equitable, and built for long-term success.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Catherine Rawson
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¹Maine Association of Recovery Residences. (n.d.). Certification.
<https://www.mainerecoveryresidences.com/certification-1>

²Recovery Research Institute. (n.d.). *LGBTQ+ in recovery*.
<https://www.recoveryanswers.org/resource/lgbtq-in-recovery/>