



Date: 05/11/2025

Good morning Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the committee.

My name is Joshua Leonard, President of the Maine Association of Recovery Residences and Director of Portland Sober Living.

Throughout my time working in the recovery community, barriers to entry into recovery residences and treatment facilities has been an ongoing issue, preventing people with drug addiction to find a structured safe harbor to begin a new life in recovery. It is almost never the case that people trying to find help for themselves have the financial means to be able to do so.

There has been a broadening of financial services offered to people in recovery to help them cover the cost to find help, but unfortunately, given the vast amount of variables of each individuals circumstances, on top of the high volume of people seeking treatment, we truly need all hands on deck and all resources at our disposal. The Maine Association of Recovery Residences has a wonderful program through our Housing Subsidy Services Program (HSSP) that offers financial assistance, but that program is limited. The program is roughly around a million dollars per year, and while that sounds like a lot, it is far short comparative to the demand for assistance. Furthermore the intent is to have this funding be accessible to as many programs as possible, so we are forced to cap how many beds can be covered per recovery residence. We have individual non-profits offering scholarship/sponsorship programs but their funding is limited. General assistance has been a tremendous resource but again, the sheer volume of people seeking treatment is overwhelming.

My program Portland Sober Living averaged a length of stay far about the average at 11-1/2 months, vastly increasing the likelihood of retention into long-term program participation outside of recovery residences, but those opportunities and that success will likely not happen if an individual can't even break through the first financial barriers to get into a program and begin their life saving transformation.

I encourage you to vote ought to pass on LD1946 and thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**Joshua Leonard**

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