

January 06, 2026

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1646:
An Act to Amend Maine's Good Samaritan Laws Regarding Suspected Drug-related Overdoses

To Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety,

My name is Kinna Thakarar, and I am writing to **support LD 1646**. I am an addiction medicine and infectious disease (ID) physician in Portland, Maine. I have been practicing medicine for 17 years, have lived in Maine for a decade, and deeply care about our community. I currently serve on several national task forces for ID and addiction professional societies, have presented nationally and internationally on ID/substance use issues, and am the principal investigator of two federally funded and state-funded overdose prevention grants.

While the number of overdose deaths in Maine are decreasing, too many of our community members are still dying from drug overdoses and still experiencing non-fatal overdoses (which are not tracked as consistently as fatal overdoses). My research focuses on the unsafe drug supply – in the small number of drug samples our team has tested thus far, several contaminants have been identified. There will no doubt be waves of new contaminants in the supply over the years as well. If someone is experiencing an overdose potentially related to the unsafe drug supply, it is **imperative that we do not roll back the protections that people have when they call 911 during an overdose**.

LD 1646 will ensure that Good Samaritan protections apply when someone calls for help, even if the caller does not explicitly say “overdose.” I urge the Committee to support LD 1646 and protect the original intent of the Maine’s Good Samaritan policy.

Thank you for your time, and I am available for any questions.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kinna Thakarar
Cape Elizabeth, ME