



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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***Testimony of Rep. Lydia Crafts introducing
LD 979, Resolve, to Fund Treatment Services and Certain Transportation Costs for
Individuals with Substance Use Disorder
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services***

Good Morning, Senator Baldacci, Representative Myer, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. I am Representative Lydia Crafts from Newcastle and have the privilege of serving House District 46. I am here today to present LD 979, *Resolve, to Fund Treatment Services and Certain Transportation Costs for Individuals with Substance Use Disorder*.

LD 979 seeks to accomplish three things: to add 100 medically supervised withdrawal beds (also known as 'detox'), to add 100 substance use treatment beds, and to reimburse the cost of transportation from the community to detox facilities.

The Department is working hard to expand accessible detox beds (low barrier, non-hospital), but there continues to be a significant need and insufficient funding to adequately address it. The \$2 million proposal in this budget will fund just over 13 new beds. Our State must do more to strengthen our response to this epidemic. When people are seeking help with SUD, detox is often the first step and to ensure accessibility, it must be low barrier and immediately available.

Additionally, when someone completes detox (a 2-3 day stay), connecting them with available treatment beds can be crucial. Many people, including my own family members, have had to find treatment options outside of Maine to get the help they need.

Finally, the language of LD 979 adds two additional functions. It includes a minimum requirement that 50% of new beds accept MaineCare. Of the non-hospital detox beds currently available (68), 62% of those do not currently accept MaineCare. Low income families in Maine deserve access to detox and treatment at the same rate as middle income families. It also allocates 25% of the beds to youth, as there are currently no youth specific detox options available in the state.

Like other public health crises, the approach to fighting the substance use crisis in our state is complex. We have continued to lose our loved ones to overdoses across our sixteen diverse counties and we are on track to continue breaking these records each year.

There are multiple policies coming before your committee and others this session to radically intervene and save the lives of our community members affected by SUD. The majority of these interventions rely on an entry point into recovery, so expanding services as I'm suggesting becomes the foundation on which we continue to build an effective and adequate legislative response.

This undoubtedly requires a significant investment by our state, but to the 716 families who lost a loved one last year, I can't imagine a price tag that wouldn't be worth saving the next 716 family from experiencing the same loss. It is undoubtedly a large task, but one well worth the effort and commitment of our legislature. I'm happy to answer any questions.