

John Clark

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Good afternoon Be-be Center Representative Salisbury and distinguished members of the criminal justice and public safety committee.

My name is Johnny Clark, and I'm in support of LD1514

I'm a constituent of Lewiston Maine a licensed Clinician as alcohol and drug counselor, MHRT-C, PBHP, Intentional peer support, State Registered recovery coach and re-entry /re-integration specialist, the reason I list all of these credentials is not for pride but because I too was formally incarcerated and suffered from substance use disorder.

I come to you today in long-term recovery I am the owner of two recovery homes one of which we are opening for women on the 15th of May I work as the program director of Maine prisoner re-entry network I'm also the owner of A Hand Up recovery and re-entry housing and the owner executive director of second chances family first recovery homes which will be opening in September .Created to help families as a whole in recovery and work through the reunification process.

I didn't start these recovery houses with the intentions of housing individuals during re-entry from incarceration but being that I'm a person in long term recovery from drugs and alcohol and a person who was formerly incarcerated I knew that the housing crisis is bad in the best of situations for people with great credit and no record. So I started helping the cause most of the time taking individuals without payment during their re-entry until it almost had me have to shut the doors. You see I may own recovery/re-entry housing and what that sounds like means I own housing, but that is simply not the case I own the programs and I write the programs I'm the operator I have rent payments, electricity, internet, water/sewer cost for supplies including UA cups ,food, office equipment and salaries, and I do not turn a profit for this. I work a nine to five job with MPRN and that is how I put food on my table and pay my bills its not fair nor feasible for me to suffer the burden because I have a heart, but I do it when I can this bill would alleviate this issue and help to provide stability to a problematic situation. This bill would Allow for individuals to get the vocational rehabilitation, financial literacy, criminal and addictive thinking work, and basic skills they need to prepare themselves to be self-sustainable reduce recidivism and save more money in the long run for our state than anything that's out there right now. I support Ld1514 and I implore all of you to support this bill that's vital to the success of individuals returning from incarceration. Thank you everyone for your time and hearing me out.