

## **Brittany Reichmann**

### **Testimony in opposition to LD 109**

1/27/2023

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety;

My name is Brittany Reichmann, I am a person in long term recovery, and I am the Program Manager for the Maine Association of Recovery Residences (MARR). I am also an active community member in my hometown of Windham, a recovery advocate, a mother, a wife, and a lot of other things-largely because of my stay in a recovery residence almost six years ago.

I am here today to testify in opposition of LD 109.

I have served as the Program Manager for MARR since July of 2020 and as the Assistant Program Manager since Nov 2019. MARR hired full time staff after the passing of LD 353. We are an affiliate of the National Alliance of Recovery Residences. We inspect and certify all of our homes by standards set out by this national organization. Those standards are available to anyone on MARR's website [www.mainerecoveryresidences.com](http://www.mainerecoveryresidences.com).

I have personally inspected all 67 of our current certified homes, multiple times in most cases, over the past 3.5 years. I have personally tested, or been witness to the testing of every single smoke alarm in every bedroom, checked every fire extinguisher and carbon monoxide detector on each floor of every home, looked over every escape map, and checked every fire drill log of all of our residences. Checking over all of these safety standards, among others, are standard at every annual or initial inspection.

I take my job very seriously. I take my recovery very seriously- in both cases, other people's lives depend on them. The safety of the residents who sleep in the 700 beds MARR oversees remains our "guiding light". Honestly, I have yet to meet an operator who does not take their residents' safety as seriously as we do.

Recovery residences are not facilities. Most of the homes we certify are much like the home I own and live in in Windham. Some are bigger, some are smaller- but they all contain one thing, a family. These certified homes have been protected to operate this way for a reason. I consider some of the women I shared my RR experience with family- in fact three of them stood by my side when I got married three years ago.

Thank you all for being here, and for all the work that you do. While annual overdose deaths in Maine continue to rise, the last thing that we need to do is create more barriers to recovery. LD 109 will cause the closure of many of our residences, and prevent others from opening which I have no doubt in my mind, will end more lives. I strongly urge you to think of the implications of this bill, and ask that you oppose LD 109. MARR has worked closely with public safety officials for years and we hope to continue to do so by allowing certified homes to be, exactly what they truly are, single family homes.