



**Testimony in Favor of LD 1719  
An Act to Establish Substance Use Disorder Treatment Centers**

May 3rd, 2023

Greetings Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and other honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee of Health and Human Services, My name is Steven Knockwood I am the Deputy Organizing Director for the Maine Recovery Advocacy Project (ME-RAP) I stand before you today to give testimony in favor of LD 1719 An Act to Establish Substance Use Disorder Treatment Centers

Detox is often the first step in someone's recovery process and when services are not readily available within a reasonable time frame lives are lost, individuals are left feeling hopeless and others affected are left to feel the pain of not being able to help an individual who wants to get better We as a society must do better, we need to expand access to these essential services These services need to be available when an individual is ready and willing not weeks to months down the road

In my time working in the field of Indigenous wellness and recovery as a Recovery Support Specialist it was my task to support individuals into early recovery services I consistently watched as these individuals were denied access to these services These individuals wanted to get better, wanted to stop the harm they were causing to their families and communities only to turn away Some of these cases are still active in their disease believing that our society deems them unworthy of assistance

A month ago today I stood in front of you and spoke about an individual who wanted to get better, but faced the all too often dilemma of not being able to find timely placement into Detox This led the individuals to plan and begin executing his own suicide I ask each and every one of you to stop sending that message to individuals who are looking to recover from SUD

Often we are told that people with substance use disorder don't want help That is not my experience. My experience is that help is not available when they want it That is why we are asking your committee to vote in favor of LD 1719

Nitap(thank you)

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