

Hi my name is Benjamin Humphrey and I would like to thank the Appropriation Committee for this opportunity to speak. I am a person of long-term recovery, and my first steps started when I walked through the doors of the Bangor Area Recovery Network (B.A.R.N). Before those steps I struggled for 25+ years of addiction and alcohol being the main source of my struggle. I went through multiple jails and institutions. I have an extended criminal record and I had many attempts of suicide and stay at the Acadia Hospital. I have had a history of hardship and sadness.

One day, about 956 days ago (not that I am counting), I was homeless and deathly deep into my addiction, I walked through the doors of The BARN and spoke to one of the employees there and said that I need to talk to someone about getting into detox. We sat there for hours and called every single detox in the state. Every door got shut closed. I left the office and just gave up, I threw out a big sigh and thought well I made an effort but it didn't work out. I went outside and sat on the lawn chairs and conversed with these gentlemen, and while I was outside, that employee was still working hard to find me a detox while I gave up. It was in Lewiston and I had no vehicle, and these two gentlemen offered their services and my recovery started there.

Today, I am finding myself being a productive citizen of society. I played a pinnacle role in opening up sober living for men which house 8 men all together. I work with the BARN as a recovery coach/peer support and also work with a Overdose Response Team which includes outreach to the many that are without housing. One of the great things that I can offer is to come to the BARN. The BARN has many resources that can get you in the right direction of recovery. The staff and volunteers are wonderful, because they have a passion and motivation to want to help those that come through the doors. I have noticed that throughout the 31 months of my recovery that the BARN has become notoriety across the state. More and more people are showing up, more people are requiring the services that the facility might be able to provide. THE BARN SAVES LIVES!

I would like to see there be more funding for the places of recovery centers. These centers are a major pinnacle point in people's lives. It gives people hope. It gives people purpose. It gives people their families. It gave me my LIFE back!

Thank you for your time!