



**NFNA Tax Budget &
Support for LD 1714 Testimony**

February 22, 2024

Good Afternoon Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, Senator Grohoski, Representative Perry, and Members of the Appropriations Committee and Members of the Taxation Committee,

My name is Courtney Gary-Allen. I am the Organizing Director of the Maine Recovery Advocacy Project (ME-RAP) and a person in long-term recovery from substance use. I am here today to request the inclusion of LD 1714: An Act to Create a Sustainable Funding Source for Recovery Community Centers Using a Percentage of the Adult Use Cannabis Tax Revenue in the amended budget.

I want to start off by extending my gratitude to the Tax Committee for ranking this bill as the foremost priority in your recent recommendations for funding to the appropriation committee. As many of you may remember, last year this bill received unanimous bi-partisan support in committee, flew through the house and senate and currently awaits funding on the table. LD 1714 proposes dedicating 12% of the cannabis tax revenue, estimated at \$5,757,990 in 2024-2025 and onwards, to establish a sustainable financial foundation for the nearly 20 recovery community centers across Maine. However, many of these centers grapple with financial instability, hindering their ability to operate effectively and ensure long-term sustainability.

A recovery community center is an independent, nonprofit organization led and governed by representatives of local recovery communities with a primary focus on recovery from substance use disorder. These centers provide nonclinical, peer recovery support services such as recovery support groups, recovery coaching, telephone recovery support, skill-building groups, and recovery focused policy and advocacy activities.

Throughout today's proceedings, you will undoubtedly hear numerous testimonies underscoring the transformative impact these centers have had on countless lives and the invaluable hope they instill within communities across Maine. Rather than reiterate these narratives, I will just say that while I hope you fund more than one thing to support recovery this year but if it was just one thing I hope it is LD 1714. This bill provides long term sustainability in the recovery community in Maine and there are no words to express the importance of that.

I thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer any questions.

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