



Testimony in Support of

LD 215: An Act to Establish a Program to Assist Residents of Large Recovery Residences

March 10th, 2025

Dear Senator Ingwerson, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Courtney Gary-Allen, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Maine Recovery Action Project (ME-RAP), a grassroots, bipartisan network of Mainers in recovery dedicated to advancing community and policy-based solutions to substance use. Today, I am testifying in support of LD 215: An Act to Establish a Program to Assist Residents of Large Recovery Residences, sponsored by Representative Hasenfus.

Throughout my career, I have worked to craft and advocate for recovery-friendly legislation, with a particular focus on recovery housing in Maine. I have been actively involved in nearly all legislative efforts in this area, including LD 964: An Act To Expand Access to Certified Substance Use Disorder Recovery Residence Services, sponsored by then-Representative Justin Fecteau. That bill, which clarified eligibility for general assistance to residents of certified recovery residences, was unanimously supported by this committee during the 130th Legislative Session, subsequently became law, and is the source of how we are back before your committee today.

When our community first advocated for general assistance eligibility for recovery residence residents, our focus was on a few small houses that served some of the most vulnerable and financially unstable individuals seeking recovery. These residences typically housed between 6 and 12 individuals. At the time, Maine had no recovery residence with more than 30 residents, and recovery housing options were particularly scarce in rural areas.

While I continue to believe that individuals living in recovery residences should be eligible for general assistance, I have also observed an unintended consequence of this law—particularly in small communities that host large recovery residences that rely on general assistance as a primary funding source for their residents. In these specific cases, certain municipalities are being asked to shoulder a disproportionate share of the tax burden to support recovery housing subsidies, resulting in significant proposed increases to property taxes in those locations. I believe that Rep. Hasenfus is proposing a very targeted and specific solution to that issue, while also balancing the desire to ensure that people who are in recovery have access to supportive housing.



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My understanding is that Representative Hasenfus plans to propose an amendment to the bill today, aiming to reallocate funding for these houses from the State General Assistance program to the newly established Recovery Residence Rental Assistance program. Under this amendment, the houses would receive 70% of the current General Assistance rate designated for recovery residences. While I need more time and information to fully analyze this proposal, I have created a spreadsheet outlining its potential impact on recovery residences and the communities they serve. I have attached this spreadsheet to my testimony for your review.

Based on my calculations, if this bill were to pass as written, four recovery residences in Maine would currently qualify for this funding stream—two in Kennebec County and two in Cumberland County—collectively providing 117 beds. This shift away from general assistance would result in an estimated annual savings of \$364,057.20 for the municipalities where these residences are located.¹

However, if the eligibility threshold were raised to 30 beds, only one residence with 48 beds would qualify for this funding, leading to an estimated net savings of \$121,305.60² for that specific municipality. I respectfully ask the committee to consider limiting this proposal to houses with more than 30 beds as a targeted approach to addressing the specific issue at hand.

I am happy to answer any questions or assist the committee with any additional research as needed.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Courtney Gary-Allen

¹This calculation is based on the rate each municipality pays per bed, which is 30% of the total amount paid by general assistance, multiplied by the number of beds in that community. It also assumes full occupancy and that all residents receive general assistance. The total cost savings to the municipalities is likely lower, due to occupancy rates and variances in payment sources for each individual resident, which may include cash pay as opposed to general assistance.

² See footnote 1

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General Assistance/Recovery Residence Rental Assistance Program Analysis

Note: This spreadsheet calculates the GA payment rate for a Recovery Residence (RR), assuming all beds are funded through General Assistance. In reality, most RRs have a mixed payment structure, with some beds covered by GA while others are paid for through cash or other sources. There are 4 RR in Maine with >20 beds that are GA Eligible with a total of 117 beds within them.
 If there are questions about this spreadsheet, please reach out to courtney@me-rap.org

RR GA Rates 2024-2025	Current Weekly	70% Weekly	Difference	Yearly Loss by RR at 20 Beds	Beds in RR >20	Total RR Loss at %70 Payment (AKA Total Savings per Local Government)	Current Monthly	70% Monthly	Monthly Difference	Yearly Loss by RR at 20 Beds	Beds in RR >20	Total Loss at %70 Payment (AKA Total Savings per Local Government)
Aroostook County	\$143.25	\$100.28	\$42.98	\$44,694.00			\$616.50	\$431.55	\$184.95	\$44,388.00		
Franklin County	\$152.25	\$106.58	\$45.68	\$47,502.00			\$654.75	\$458.33	\$196.43	\$47,142.00		
Hancock County	\$189.00	\$132.30	\$56.70	\$58,968.00			\$812.25	\$568.58	\$243.68	\$58,482.00		
Kennebec County	\$162.00	\$113.40	\$48.60	\$50,544.00	70	\$176,904.00	\$695.25	\$486.68	\$208.58	\$50,058.00	70	\$175,203.00
Knox County	\$162.00	\$113.40	\$48.60	\$50,544.00			\$695.25	\$486.68	\$208.58	\$50,058.00		
Lincoln County	\$184.50	\$129.15	\$55.35	\$57,564.00			\$792.75	\$554.93	\$237.83	\$57,078.00		
Oxford County	\$155.25	\$108.68	\$46.58	\$48,438.00			\$668.25	\$467.78	\$200.48	\$48,114.00		
Piscataquis County	\$146.25	\$102.38	\$43.88	\$45,630.00			\$630.00	\$441.00	\$189.00	\$45,360.00		
Somerset County	\$159.00	\$111.30	\$47.70	\$49,608.00			\$684.00	\$478.80	\$205.20	\$49,248.00		
Waldo County	\$186.00	\$130.20	\$55.80	\$58,032.00			\$799.50	\$559.65	\$239.85	\$57,564.00		
Washington County	\$144.00	\$100.80	\$43.20	\$44,928.00			\$620.25	\$434.18	\$186.08	\$44,658.00		
Bangor	\$183.00	\$128.10	\$54.90	\$57,096.00			\$786.75	\$550.73	\$236.03	\$56,646.00		
Cumberland County	\$219.75	\$153.83	\$65.93	\$68,562.00	22	\$75,418.20	\$945.75	\$662.03	\$283.73	\$68,094.00	22	\$74,903.40
Lewiston/Auburn	\$165.00	\$115.50	\$49.50	\$51,480.00			\$709.50	\$496.65	\$212.85	\$51,084.00		
Penoscot County	\$150.75	\$105.53	\$45.23	\$47,034.00			\$648.75	\$454.13	\$194.63	\$46,710.00		
Portland	\$286.50	\$200.55	\$85.95	\$89,388.00	25	\$111,735.00	\$1,233.00	\$863.10	\$369.90	\$88,776.00	25	\$110,970.00
Sagadahoc	\$198.75	\$139.13	\$59.63	\$62,010.00			\$855.00	\$598.50	\$256.50	\$61,560.00		
York Cty.	\$216.75	\$151.73	\$65.03	\$67,626.00			\$931.50	\$652.05	\$279.45	\$67,068.00		
York/Kittery/S Berw	\$248.25	\$173.78	\$74.48	\$77,454.00			\$1,068.75	\$748.13	\$320.63	\$76,950.00		
			\$1,035.68	\$1,077,102.00	117	\$364,057.20			\$4,454.33	\$1,069,038.00	117	\$361,076.40

2024-2025 GA Housing Maximums

Recovery Residences

The following Recovery Residence maximums are in effect from 10/1/2024- 9/30/2025

Non-Metropolitan FMR Areas

<u>Aroostook County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$143.25	\$616.50

<u>Franklin County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$152.25	\$654.75

<u>Hancock County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$189.00	\$812.25

<u>Kennebec County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$162.00	\$695.25

<u>Knox County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$162.00	\$695.25

<u>Lincoln County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$184.50	\$792.75

<u>Oxford County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$155.25	\$668.25

<u>Piscataquis County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$146.25	\$630.00

<u>Somerset County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$159.00	\$684.00

<u>Waldo County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$186.00	\$799.50

<u>Washington County</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$144.00	\$620.25

Metropolitan FMR Areas

<u>Bangor HMEA</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$183.00	\$786.75

<u>Cumberland Cty. HMEA</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$219.75	\$945.75

<u>Lewiston/Auburn MSA</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$165.00	\$709.50

<u>Penobscot Cty. HMEA</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$150.75	\$648.75

<u>Portland HMEA</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$286.50	\$1,233.00

<u>Sagadahoc Cty. HMEA</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$198.75	\$855.00

<u>York Cty. HMEA</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$216.75	\$931.50

<u>York/Kittery/S Berwick HMEA</u>	<u>Recovery Residence Rates</u>	
	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$248.25	\$1,068.75