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Testimony in Support of LD 779
An Act to Fund the Aroostook County Drug Treatment Court
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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today in support of L.D. 779, An Act to Fund the Aroostook County Drug Treatment Court. My name is Clement Deveau, am a Program Director for Behavioral Health and Integration with the Aroostook Mental Health Center. I am here to advocate for funding for an Aroostook County Drug Treatment Court. The Adult Drug Treatment Court is supported by research and has been considered nationally as a primary intervention in addressing substance use disorders within the justice system.

As reflected in AMHC's earlier testimony for LD 753, AMHC has experience providing evidenced based All Rise Adult Treatment Court services. This model integrates judicial oversight, treatment, and accountability to support a structured path to recovery. Research has consistently shown that treatment courts reduce substance use, improve mental and physical health outcomes, and increase long-term employment for participants.

Adult Treatment and Recovery Court is a significant cost savings. Nationally, studies show that for every \$1 invested in drug courts, taxpayers could save over \$3 in reduced criminal justice costs. Treatment courts help divert individuals from expensive jail and prison sentences into programs that address substance use and criminal behavior, ultimately reducing the burden on law enforcement, courts, and correctional facilities.

As identified earlier, treatment courts reduce recidivism. Data reflects that individuals who participate in treatment court programs are less likely to reoffend. Individuals who participate in treatment court for a year have almost 70% less convictions and similarly almost 70% fewer arrests compared to similar individuals not engaged in treatment court. Treatment courts demonstrate measurable outcomes, restore lives and support safer communities.

In summary, Adult Treatment and Recovery Courts are a proven, cost-effective solution. All Rise Adult Treatment Court practice standards not only reduce crime and save taxpayer dollars but also offer individuals opportunities to rebuild their lives and contribute to their communities. I urge this committee to fund the implementation of Adult Treatment Court in Aroostook County to provide recovery/rehabilitation and healthier communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.