



### **Testimony in Support of LD 604:**

#### **An Act to Ensure Access to Concurrent Methadone Treatment and Intensive Outpatient Programs**

March 13, 2025

My name is Tess Parks. I am the Policy Director of the Maine Recovery Action Project (ME-RAP), a grassroots network of Mainers working on community and public policy based solutions to substance use. I am here today to testify in favor of LD 604 on behalf of our statewide team of organizers.

As a listening first organization, ME-RAP conducted 33 listening sessions this past summer from York County to Aroostook County to hear from communities impacted by addiction. We heard from some individuals that MaineCare will not concurrently cover methadone maintenance for the treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD) and participation in intensive outpatient programs (IOPs). These individuals expressed frustration in not being able to participate in comprehensive treatment services. Under current MaineCare billing policies, methadone treatment and IOPs are considered duplicative services.

Recovery is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor. Many individuals require a combination of medication assisted treatment (MAT) and behavioral health interventions, including IOP services, to get to the root causes of addiction and to develop coping strategies for sustained recovery. This bill aligns with best practices recommended by leading health organizations, such as the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SAMHSA recommends the use of medications, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, to provide a "whole patient" approach to the treatment of substance use disorders (SUDs)<sup>1</sup>.

Current MaineCare billing rules undermine the effectiveness of our substance use treatment system by creating barriers to receiving integrated care. Providing a full spectrum of care gives individuals a better chance of sustaining recovery, which decreases relapse rates and healthcare costs associated with emergency department visits and hospitalizations. Ensuring that individuals can access the full spectrum of care will not only improve health outcomes but also enhance public safety and economic stability in our communities.

We urge this committee to support LD 604 and take this critical step toward expanding access to effective, life-saving treatment for Mainers struggling with OUD.

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

Sincerely,

Tess Parks  
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.samhsa.gov/substance-use/treatment/options>