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Testimony of Rep. Sam Zager presenting

LD 710, An Act to Expand Access and Reduce Barriers to Access to Naloxone Hydrochloride and Other Opioid Overdose-reversing Medications
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Senator Ingwerson, Representative Meyer, esteemed fellow committee members, thank you for hearing **LD 710, An Act to Expand Access and Reduce Barriers to Access to Naloxone Hydrochloride and Other Opioid Overdose-reversing Medications**.

I am presenting this bill on behalf of the Department, and Katherine Coutu from the Office of Behavioral Health will be testifying after me.

At its core, this bill facilitates access to life-saving opioid reversal medications, through a variety of small changes to Title 22, Chapter 556-A, section 2353:

1. Strengthens immunity protections for Good Samaritans.
2. Permits a municipality to dispense an opioid overdose-reversing medication from a vending machine.
3. Removes the training requirement. Naloxone hydrochloride ("Narcan") is an ideal life-saving medicine for a Good Samaritan who has no formal medical training. It is highly effective, immediately active, easy and safe to administer, and rather inexpensive. When administered to someone suffering an overdose of opioids, it very well can save their life. If administered by accident to someone who was mistakenly thought to be experiencing an overdose, it causes no harm.
4. Generalizes statute from naloxone to "any opioid overdose reversing medication." Naloxone is the most well known of these, but it is not alone and likely new medicines will be developed. It therefore does not make much sense to limit statute to this one particular medicine.

Thank you very much for hearing this bill, and I look forward to fruitful discussions as a committee.