

May 7, 2025

**Gwen Jordan Testimony on LD 1425:
An Act to Improve Access to Sustainable and Low-barrier Trauma Recovery Services**

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services: My name is Gwen Jordan and I live in Lewiston, Maine. I am here to **testify in support of LD 1425, An Act to Improve Access to Sustainable and Low-barrier Trauma Recovery Services.**

I was at Just-in-Time on October 25, 2023. When I think about the support from the Maine Resiliency Center and the people I've met there, it's hard to pick one or two things to talk about. There isn't a moment that sticks out, because it's all the moments.

One thing I've learned through all of this is that it's okay to reach out for help. After the shooting, I really shut down. I ignored that it happened. Even now a bit, I kind of want to pretend like it didn't happen and just live my life. But the staff here helped me understand that you can't really hide from things like that because what happened was really traumatic and it comes up when I least expect it.

I felt like going back to bowling was important. I could just hear one of the coaches we lost that night say, "you need to go back" and I knew he'd want us to go back and do our best. Knowing that the center's staff would be at the soft opening of the bowling alley - and knowing that they are in reach if I need anything - helped me go back.

The people I've made connections with at the center means that I have a whole other family of support. No matter my mood, they know when they look at me what kind of mood I'm in because they know me. If I'm in a bad mood, they make things better. My family and I were coming to an ice cream event at the center and on the way in, I got hit by a guy on a bike. The guy was awful - he yelled at me and I was shaken and scared.

When we got to the MRC, so many people were there for me. They were concerned, helping me, and giving me advice. They helped calm me down, which was helpful because I had my license test the next day. That moment made me realize that from now on, anything I go through there will be someone there, whether what I go through is related to the shooting or not. There are always people to help and if they don't know how to help, they know someone who can.

I used to pretend I wasn't at the shooting. I wouldn't say anything even when people were talking about the shooting and it was affecting me. Now I'm not scared to say anything about it. The MRC made me realize that I have a voice. Now I'm not scared of telling people I was there that night. I'm not ashamed about it. They helped me realize that I am not a burden if I tell people I was there - and even if people have bad responses to it, I'm not ashamed.

I'm about to graduate from high school and I'm proud to say that the invite list for my graduation party has doubled because of the people who have become family through the MRC. I'm grateful for the support they've given me and the community they helped us build. I hope you vote to support this bill so the MRC can continue to help people who need them to keep helping.