

May 7, 2025

**Janet Gabri - Testimony in Support of 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 Janet Gabri and I live in Lewiston, Maine. I am here to testify in support of LD1425.

On October 25, 2023, when Robert Card entered Just-In-Time Recreation, I was watching my two children bowl at their weekly league practice. At the time they were ages 9 and 10. When I say we quite literally had to run for our lives, it is not an exaggeration. Gunfire came down the lanes where we were bowling as we were trying to get away as fast as we possibly could. We managed to escape and barricade ourselves in a back room with a mother and her child, and one other child who had been shot in the arm and was bleeding profusely. I was able to successfully get through to the 9-1-1 operator, relay the necessary information she needed, and render aid to the child who had been shot. My children and the other little girl squeezed themselves under a desk and prayed to Jesus that we would all be okay. I stand here before you with my two children by the Grace of God. Even though our lives were spared that day, we are forever changed.

In the weeks and months following the shooting, I went to many funerals to grieve the loss of my friends and community members. It wasn't until The Maine Resiliency Center had a night where everyone from that night could safely gather, that I was able to reunite with the boy who had been shot and was barricaded in that back room with us. I was also able to meet the rest of his family and hug his mother. This was the start of my relationship with The Maine Resiliency Center.

Over the past year and several months, my children and I have attended many support groups, skills classes, game nights, potlucks, candlelight vigils, carnivals, and other events The Maine Resiliency Center has hosted. Along side of the MRC staff, Regina Schulman, the primary facilitator of the adult group, has provided a safe and confidential place for us to gather, for us to share our stories and shed our tears without judgement. She has also taught me things I didn't know about myself and has given me tools to help manage the stresses that have come about as a result of this tragedy. My children have often referred to their kids support group with Miss Kara and Miss Kate as therapy. They have learned skills to help them cope with this horrific event no child should ever have to cope with. I often hear about the resiliency of Mainers, and while I generally believe this to be true, the city of Lewiston is a hurting community who would benefit immensely from The Maine Resiliency Center.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote for LD 1425. I am happy to answer questions if you have any.