

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Danielle Chabot and I live in Winthrop. I am here to testify in support of LD 1425, An Act to Improve Access to Sustainable and Low-barrier Trauma Recovery Services.

On the evening of October 25, 2023 my husband and I were at Just In Time Bowling center in Lewiston, Maine, along with the rest of our adult bowling league. Between us and the shooter that night, were mostly children bowling. The events that we witnessed that night were things I wouldn't wish upon anyone and they were things that each of us who walked away alive that night will have to live with for the rest of our lives. The past year and half have been far from easy. We are doing better, learning to re-assimilate into regular life. We even laugh and have fun sometimes. Some of the survivors are back bowling or playing cornhole. But every single one of us still struggles. It might be a sound, or a smell, or a song, or maybe we just wake up missing a friend or family member who was taken from us that night. Something triggers us and we are right back there, reliving every harrowing second of that evening.

There are so many of us who are able to get up every day, go to work, take care of our children, go out to the grocery store or a restaurant or wherever it is that we need to or want to go - because of the help and support that the Resiliency center has given to us since opening it's doors. I've done therapy on my own regarding this tragedy weekly since two days after the shooting. I've done EMDR, trauma focused specialty treatments, you name it. But the group meetings for the survivors that were held weekly at the Resiliency center have helped me more than I can even tell you. If they were to be discontinued, I really am not sure what I would do. Just to know that that group of people is available to us there gives me a sense of security and support that is beyond measure. The relationships that we have formed throughout the different groups have allowed us to realize we aren't alone. Because I'll tell you - sometimes it feels like it. I live in Winthrop, Maine. How many people around me can relate to being in a mass shooting while out just having fun with their friends? To having an AR 10 jam while someone had it aimed at you? To losing multiple friends in less than one minute? You

start to feel like you aren't healing fast enough or you aren't going to ever recover. The Resiliency center provides us an environment where we can come together and realize we are not alone. We realize there are many of us who are having similar feelings and experiences. They support us through so many things - from the first time we went back to the bowling alley, to the first time going to a group gathering, to events that they sponsor to encourage us to get out and do "normal" things again. On the fourth of July they provided a safe environment to watch the Fireworks together. Not everyone would have thought of how difficult it might be for us to even hear fireworks, never mind enjoy them. They think of all of the things and they make our lives liveable. We aren't anywhere close to done healing. I don't know what that timeframe is. Most days I don't even know what that looks like. But I do know that we aren't there yet and the Resiliency center is a huge part of healing for so many of us.

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