



Maine Association of
Recovery Residences

844 Stevens Ave. 1st floor REAR, Portland ME 04103

www.mainerecoveryresidences.com

May 19th, 2025

Ought NOT to Pass

TESTIMONY of Dr. Ronald Springel on behalf of the Maine Association of Recovery Residences on H P 1317 (LD 1973) **Resolve, to Establish the Commission to Study Oversight and Funding Structures for Recovery Residences and Resident Protections**

Presented by Rep. David Rollins (D) Augusta

Dear Senator Henry Ingwersen, and Representative Michele Meyer, co-chairs of the Joint Committee of the Maine Legislature on Health and Human Services and honorable members of the Committee.

My name is **Dr. Ronald Springel**, I am a retired addiction medicine physician and a resident of Scarborough. I am a person in recovery and serving as the Executive Director of the Maine Association of Recovery Residences. My testimony today is on behalf of that organization.

MARR is a 501 (c) 3 charitable organization who inspects and certifies recovery residences at the standard of the National Alliance for Recovery Residences. Our members operate 100 recovery residences with over 1200 beds in 13 counties.

Let me start by expressing our disappointment that this RESOLVE was presented in the manner it was with virtually no notice to myself or our 13-member Board. We worked with Rep. Rollins and representatives from ME_RAP to write the original bill to consider mandatory certification of recovery residences in our state. While MARR has been reluctant in the past to urge passage of such legislation, when data from 2023 revealed a 6-fold increase in the chance of experiencing a fatal overdose in a non-certified residence compared to a certified house, we felt we could no longer equivocate.

When ME-RAP came to us asking us to work with them in drafting a bill that would require the estimated 2 dozen or so non-certified residences to adhere to national certification standards we agreed to collaborate. Because we have already studied the movement toward mandatory certification in other states, we were familiar with the best and the worst of the various state laws and rulemaking.

The states of Virginia, Florida and Ohio have been the national leaders in this area. Virginia currently has a study group but Ohio, after a year of consideration, established mandatory certification effective January 1, 2025. We believe their model is, by far, the gold standard and would be a benefit in Maine. Several states began licensing



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programs only to find a third-party certification organization, such as what we have in Maine, produces superior results. Kentucky and New Jersey are examples.

On its face, MARR does not object to a Commission to study the various elements proposed in the bill. If we had been involved in its drafting, we would have shared the failed 3-year experiment with cannabis use in Maine recovery residences. We would have described the previous legislation that has been a great boon to operators, such as the narrowly drawn eviction carve out of LD 597. (REF: LD 597 - *An Act to Improve Conditions for People Living in Recovery Residences by Requiring Approved Discharge and Transfer Policies*).

As it stands, this RESOLVE is a huge undertaking to accomplish in such a short period. While MARR would muster the mountains of data and research we have already accumulated, we know producing a report in this calendar year is unrealistic.

Our hope was that the original bill would provide ample opportunity for public comment and departmental rulemaking to address the many concerns in the RESOLVE and save the lives of people in uncertified residences that certainly will be lost by further delay.

Therefore, the MARR Board of Directors urges the committee OUGHT NOT TO PASS this bill.

Most sincerely and respectfully,

Ronald D. Springel, MD
Executive Director
Maine Association of Recovery Residences
Ron@mainerecoveryresidences.com
207-228-5456

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