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From: Joey and Colleen Brown <joecolbrown95@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 5:34 AM
To: Cmte CJPS
Subject: Testimony to Oppose amendments to LD 1646

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Senator, Representative, and Members of the Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on L.D. 1646.

Oppose

I want to be clear at the outset that I fully support immediate medical intervention when a person is experiencing a suspected drug-related overdose. Saving a life must always be the priority, and Maine has already taken important and appropriate steps by making Narcan widely available and accessible throughout the state.

My concern with this bill is that it extends immunity well beyond the scope of emergency medical response. By limiting the use of evidence related to drug use or distribution and by preventing consequences for existing probation or court-ordered conditions when those violations are discovered during an overdose response, the bill weakens the very systems that are meant to interrupt ongoing addiction and drug trafficking.

Narcan and emergency response are essential tools, but they are not solutions. Narcan functions as a reset button. Without sufficient mental health capacity, timely access to treatment, and a judicial system that consistently enforces supervision and court-ordered interventions, we remain locked in a cycle of overdose, revival, release, and repeat. That cycle does not serve individuals struggling with addiction, their families, or Maine communities.

I am also concerned that expanding immunity in overdose responses may undermine existing laws that allow drug distributors to be held accountable when a sale results in serious injury or death. Those cases often depend on evidence and identification developed at or near the time of an overdose response. While this bill does not explicitly repeal those statutes, it risks narrowing the practical ability to enforce them.

More broadly, I believe this bill reflects a recurring pattern in Maine's substance use policy: reactive legislation that addresses immediate crises without resolving the underlying structural gaps. We continue to expand emergency response and immunity while mental health capacity, treatment availability, and consistent judicial enforcement lag behind. This cycle of action and reaction has not pushed Maine forward and has left us in perpetual damage control rather than prevention.

I believe we can save lives and maintain accountability. Policies that prioritize treatment access, expand mental health capacity, and strengthen — rather than dilute — the effectiveness of the judicial system are more likely to break the cycle of addiction and reduce harm over time. For these reasons, I cannot support L.D. 1646 as written.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Wright Brown

Sent from my iPhone