



## Testimony in Support of LD 1911:

### *An Act to Automatically Seal Criminal History Record Information for Certain Crimes*

January 8, 2026

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Tess Parks, and I am the Policy Director of Maine Recovery Action Project (ME-RAP), a statewide grassroots network working on community and policy-based solutions to substance use. I recently served on the Criminal Records Review Committee as a representative of Maine's recovery community. I am testifying in support of LD 1911 on behalf of our statewide team of organizers.

ME-RAP is a listening-first organization. Between legislative sessions, we travel from Aroostook County to York County and every county in between to hear from communities impacted by addiction. One message we consistently hear is that past legal records make it harder for people in recovery to find jobs with livable wages and to secure housing.

These barriers do not exist in a vacuum. They are among the many social and economic costs of our opioid epidemic. In response to this crisis, our Maine Attorney General and 39 litigating subdivisions filed suit to hold pharmaceutical companies accountable for their role in the widespread overprescription of opiates. They knowingly and intentionally underplayed the addictive risks of opiates. At the peak of this crisis, Maine had the sixth highest mortality rate for overdose deaths in the Country<sup>1</sup>.

Maine will receive approximately \$230 million in opioid settlement funds through 2038. Millions are already being invested in prevention, treatment, and recovery services. As a state, we invest significant funds each year into SUD treatment programs, recovery residences, drug treatment courts, and many other services to bolster recovery and healing. Lives are being saved. Fatal overdoses are going down.

These investments are not just critical at the individual level. The economic toll of the opioid crisis has been staggering in Maine. According to researchers out of UMaine<sup>2</sup>, we lost approximately \$270 million in market and non-market activity due to drug-related morbidity in 2019 alone. Other researchers estimate that the combined cost of opioid use disorder and fatal opioid overdose totaled more than \$6.8 billion in Maine, and that figure was estimated in 2017<sup>3</sup>.

Our budget and spending shows that we believe recovery is possible. By enacting LD 1911, we can ensure our significant investments in recovery services and programs are not in vain. The costs of not doing so are high. We all benefit when earned second chances are available to our community members.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I am happy to answer any questions.

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<sup>1</sup> Drug Overdose Mortality: Death Data Maps. CDC. 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Daley, Angela, Prianka M. Sarker, Liam Sigaud, Marcella H. Sorg, and Jamie A. Wren. "Drug-Related Morbidity and Mortality in Maine: Lost Productivity from 2015 to 2020." *Maine Policy Review* 31.1 (2022) : 8 -18, <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mpr/vol31/iss1/1>.

<sup>3</sup> Luo F, Li M, Florence C. State-Level Economic Costs of Opioid Use Disorder and Fatal Opioid Overdose — United States, 2017. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2021;70:541–546. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7015a1>

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