Ahmed Abdirahman PORTLAND

I, Ahmed Abdirahman, assistant Imam and youth educator at Maine Muslim Community Center, a nonprofit that serves the religious and social needs of the Muslim Community in Portland, am for the proposed legislation. I have helped families struggling with youth drug addiction. Once the parent learns about the first drug related police encounter with her/his teen, the parent starts panicking about the beginning of traumatizing endless cycle of fear and hopelessness. When the teen is released and assigned to probation officer, it is usually quick that the teen commits a second offense, and the cycle continues for the worse. Because almost all of our parents don't knowledge on how to deal with a person struggling with addiction, the life of the entire family becomes a hell. Some portents resort to abandon the their addicted child and move out of State in hopes that they might save the rest of the household. Some move with the addicted teen to find resources in other states. Many times, the teen will not agree with the family. I, personally, have been emotionally traumatized by witnessing so many cases of these families struggling with this problems. I don't sleep well because of my involvement in this traumatizing cases.

In addition, the stigma for the teen and the entire family brings another level of suffering.