



March 25, 2021

LD 663, An Act To Make Comprehensive Substance Use Disorder Treatment Available to Maine's Incarcerated Population

Thank you Senator Deschambeault, Representative Warren, and members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee, my name is Bruce Noddin and I am the Executive Director of The Maine Prisoner Re-Entry Network or MPRN, a state-wide non-profit focused on providing peer support and coordinating community resources for hundreds of individuals returning to Maine communities from prison and jail.

I am writing in support of LD 663, An Act To Make Comprehensive Substance Use Disorder Treatment Available to Maine's Incarcerated Population

In the last two years we have been so impressed with the rapid implementation of evidence-based medication assisted treatment (MAT) within all Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) facilities. MPRN was pleased to be included in the early development of MDOC's MAT Pilot, that is now a fully implemented, successful program. MDOC included community organizations, like ours, in the development process and we are proud of the department and leadership for addressing the need for Opioid Use treatment so rapidly and effectively.

MPRN sees LD 663 as an opportunity to codify the hard work and well-established MAT program achieved by MDOC and community partners.

We also see LD 663 as an opportunity to improve upon these unprecedented accomplishments. The best programs continually assess themselves seeking continuous quality improvement. From our perspective, residents of MDOC facilities are not fully aware of all of the treatment and recovery options available to advance their recovery. To address the issue and further strengthen this bill, we are proposing a friendly amendment to Section F:

“I propose that the Dept of Correction could encourage community-based recovery and treatment organizations to work together to educate all residents of the Dept of Correction on all evidenced-based treatment options to support recovery. This education will support the information provided by the medical and mental health staff and allow residents to make informed choices about treatment and recovery pathways. The work of these community-based organizations will assist MDOC in expanding their reach.”

We see this amendment as an opportunity to connect community-based recovery organizations with folks who will be returning to the community and provide substance use treatment information from an independent source. These are life changing medical decisions. We hope that this effort will make for better informed treatment and recovery consumers.

Bruce Noddin, Executive Director
Maine Prisoner Re-Entry Network (MPRN)