

Rossana Natalini
STANDISH

May 10, 2021

Senator Deschambault, Rep Warren and honorable members of the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee. My name is Rossana Natalini. I live in I am here today to speak in favor of L.D. 1668 Resolve, To Develop a Plan To Close the Long Creek Youth Development Center and Redirect Funding to Community Integration Services for Adjudicated Youth.

My son Dante was a very happy child. He liked to play sports especially basketball and football. He ran marathons including the Beach to Beacon. He had lots of friends. Everyone loved him.

He was sexually abused by his step father a USA Marine, the person who was supposed to love and protect him. My son began to struggle. He did not know what to do with his anger. He became depressed and suffered from PTSD. He got into a fight and ended up at Long Creek Juvenile Detention Center.

My son Dante needed professional help, but what he got was mental and physical abuse while in Long Creek. Despite my attempts at advocating for him with the administration, he left Long Creek worse than when he went in.

Dante continued to help others, helping with Thanksgiving food drives for the needy. But, because of his criminal record, he was targeted by the police. He struggled with anger issues and ultimately spent time in jail. I asked the DA to intervene. Dante needed professional help, especially after a friend who had been at Long Creek with him committed suicide..... He became severely depressed.

When he went to jail his pleas for help went unanswered. On March 28,2017 he took his own life while in jail.

I begged everyone to please help my son and I told them my son needs professional help not jail. He was a good and kind person. The state failed him. We need more mental health treatment and less jail.

People with mental illness should get treatment not the isolation and abuse of jail. Spend money on mental health treatment so they can get the help they deserve. Close Long Creek.

The state failed my son and my family. I do not want this to happen to anyone else.

Thank-you for supporting LD 1668, close Long Creek.

Rossana Natalini