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LD 1862

Enacting LD 1862 is a necessity. LD 1862 will be a success if even a single life is spared by one person knowing of this law and feeling comfortable alerting emergency services to an overdose. Maine's failure to put its full weight behind humane drug policy is the proximate cause of many of the over 550 overdose deaths that plagued our families, friends, coworkers, and neighbors in 2021. LD 1862 may not be a panacea, but it is a necessary first step.

We know the root causes of substance use disorders. We also know that a criminal record manufactures those exact same conditions, those being poverty, disillusionment, and hopelessness. To needlessly replicate those root conditions and force them upon a person who took steps to save someone's life is bad policy, but more importantly, it is abject cruelty.

This State can easily redirect its resources toward helping those who need it. To do so, it need only step above the antiquated conception of substance use as a moral failing. That framework has killed millions since it began plaguing public policy and it needs to be swept into the trashcan of history. We can start that process by taking the remarkably common-sense step of ending the criminalization of attempting to save a life.

Passage of LD 1862 would be a small but essential victory. It will signal that this government values human life more than retribution for minor drug offenses. Please, back away from the war on people who use drugs and end the disgusting calculus of assessing the risk of calling emergency services to save someone's life.