

Peter Bruun  
Damariscotta  
LD 109

My name is Peter Bruun and I live in Damariscotta, Maine. I do not run a recovery house, I have not lived in a recovery house, but I am a taxpaying, United States citizen living in Maine whose daughter did NOT have access to living in a recovery house when it would have most benefitted her. She died of an opioid overdose in 2014.

This proposed legislation would lead to multiple closures of recovery houses all across Maine – the massive elimination of beds and safe homes for those with are doing all they can to give recovery and life a chance even as they take on the daily struggle of living with SUD. Put plainly, people suffering (as my daughter had) will die if this legislation is passed.

THAT is the consequence.

For the past nearly 10 years, I have been a vocal advocate for compassion and evidence-based approaches to supporting the wellness of those affected by SUD. In my work, I have seen the life-saving value of recovery houses – basically safe homes for those seeking wellness – homes essentially little different from the homes you or I live in.

This position is one grounded in discrimination: why are we not all required to have sprinkler systems and these houses are? It is an inhumane piece of legislation, grounded in stigma, based on fear, and driven by "othering" people who really are just like you and me but for a disorder they are seeking to manage.

This proposed legislation has "NIMBY" written all over it. It is crafted for the very purpose of presenting obstacles to allowing recovery houses to function, and this in a national climate where (according to SAMHSA), "for people who are newly sober, recovery housing can provide time and support as they learn how to sustain long-term recovery. In fact, the recovery residence model is gaining momentum nationwide."

That this legislation poses as having "safety" in mind is a joke. It will kill people.

I want to thank you for the work you are doing on behalf of all Mainers. I want to thank you for taking to heart the consequences on real lives of your choices, and for taking the time to truly educate yourselves on the issues – an education I am confident will lead you to join me and so many Mainers of all political persuasion and background to oppose LD 109.

Thank you.