

Wednesday, January 25, 2023

Testimony in Opposition to LD109

Dear Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety,

My name is Glenn Gordon and I reside in Mexico, ME. I am providing testimony in opposition to LD109. I am Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC) and the Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach Naloxone and Safety (OPTIONS) Liaison for Oxford County.

There are many challenges that make it difficult to address the number of fatal overdoses and the substance use epidemic in the state of Maine. One of the biggest barriers to recovery for people is access to safe affordable housing and residential treatment. Recovery residences or sober living provide a critical resource to provide stability and support to those new in recovery.

LD109 would require burdens that many sober living facilities could not afford. The people living in the residence would not be able to afford to pay increased rent to offset the costs. Many of them are just resuming employment and trying to get back on their feet. If facilities were to close it would force many people back out onto the streets, which would likely facilitate a return to substance use and possible tragedy.

The closure of facilities would also impact those currently seeking housing. The state is challenged with a lack residential treatment. Sober living is an affordable alternative. Lives have been saved and we have benefitted from the growth of residences throughout the state in the last couple of years. We are in desperate need of sober living residences in Oxford County.

Members of sober living residences live like family under one roof. They frequently eat together, attend meetings together and come and grow as groups. They bond and look out for one another and act in concert. This provides the safety net that a family serves in a dwelling.

Please consider the impact this legislation will have on those in sober living residences and those who need them. Vote to Oppose LD 109.

Respectfully.

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