

Jeanne Marquis  
China  
LD 1315

Greetings: Sponsor, Senator Pouliot and Committee Chair, Senator Joe Rafferty and the honorable Committee on Educational and Cultural Affairs. I am Jeanne Marquis, an organizer for the Maine Advocacy Recovery Project and a parent of a son in recovery.

I am testifying in FAVOR of LD1315: An Act to Require Instructions in Schools on Substance Abuse Prevention and Administration of Naloxone. This proposed legislation was written by youth who are experiencing substance use in their families and are part of the youth caucus for the Maine Recovery Advocacy Project and plan to take a role in the implementation of this legislation.

These youth know, first hand, that more can be done through their schools. We have heard from their own voices that they don't want to be told "just say NO." – They want to hear more about prevention and what to do if their family members and friends are using substances. They have learned how easy it is to administer nasal naloxone and want to teach it to their peers. LD1315 was written listening to the voices of youth and has bipartisan support.

This bill will require secondary schools to annually provide students with an age-appropriate instructional program on the use and misuse of drugs and controlled substances, the dangers of substance abuse, and substance abuse prevention. The instructional program will also include instruction on providing appropriate assistance to an overdose victim, such as how to administer naloxone.

Why should we teach young people to save lives? The unfortunate truth is that opioid addiction has reached epidemic proportions, crosses into all segments of our society, and has touched many of our families. Young people across Maine witness substance use by their parents, older siblings, and classmates. They often are the only ones home when a crisis occurs. It is better to prepare the youth to administer this simple nasal spray and call 911 then let a parent die in front of their eyes.

I urge you to support LD1315. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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