



MILESTONE
RECOVERY

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Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the joint standing committee on Health and Human Services: my name is Oliver Bradeen, I am the executive Recovery in director of Milestone Portland, Maine and I am here today to testify in favor of LD 964: An Act To Expand Access to Certified Substance Use Disorder Recovery Residences.

Milestone Recovery operates a 10 bed Maine Association of Recovery Residences (MARR) certified recovery residence in Portland and utilizes recovery housing regularly for individuals completing our medically monitored withdrawal program (Detox). Recovery housing is an essential part of our continuum of substance use disorder (SUD) care. We know that safe and stable housing is a basic human need and also essential to recovery. Until the creation of MARR, recovery housing in Maine had no standards and no oversight. Without this oversight people desperate for safety and housing could be taken advantage of by expensive houses with little to no standard of operations. MARR has helped to standardize and professionalize the operation of recovery houses in Maine.

Milestone Recovery, as a social non-profit, operates our recovery house as affordably as possible for our clients. This still equates to \$595 per month in rent. We have not been able to utilize general assistance to access payments for our residents. What we have heard in the past is that our GA will assist with dual occupancy rooms, but that the reimbursement for that is half of the single occupancy rate which would pay us around \$250 per month. While this certainly is better than no payment at all, it does not allow us to operate the house without taking a substantial loss.

Many of the clients we serve through our detox are seeking recovery housing. The biggest barrier for them is often cost. Having a funding stream through GA to support payment and access to recovery housing would ensure equity in access for Mainers seeking recovery housing. Tying the GA funding to certified houses would ensure housing operators do not take advantage of residents or GA fungins. For these reasons Milestone Recovery is in support of LD 964.

Thank you,

Oliver Bradeen, LCPC

Executive Director
Milestone Recovery

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