

**Testimony in Favor of LD 964:  
An Act to Expand Access to Certified Substance Use Disorder  
Recovery Residence Services**

April 2, 2021

Dear Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer & Members of the Health & Human Services Committee,

My name is Karen Hardy, and I am a resident of Belgrade, ME. I am a mental health and addiction counselor, mother of a child in recovery from substance use, and a taxpayer in the State. For all of these reasons, I am in support of this Bill.

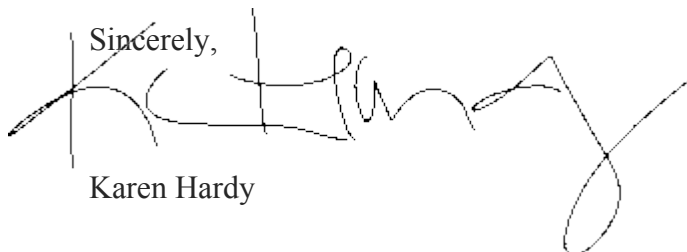
I am here to testify in favor of LD 964, *An Act to Expand Access to Certified Substance Use Disorder Recovery Residence Services*. This bill is important to people in recovery because it makes sure that they receive the same General Assistance benefits as anyone else in the same municipality. The bill is also important because it creates accountability for public funds by requiring recovery residences that receive State or local dollars to be certified by the Maine Association of Recovery Residences.

I believe that individuals trying to live without substances and re-entering the community either following a stay in jail/prison or a treatment program, should have the best opportunities possible to do so. That means they deserve a safe residence with the same opportunities for State support as other individuals. My son spent short periods of time in recovery residences, and it was extremely difficult to earn a living and support himself without some supports. Some of the residences he resided in were not certified/overseen by any regulations of the State (though they were not in the State of ME), but they were very unsafe and unhealthy environments that he was in due to those residences not being Certified.

As a taxpayer, I would like to see State funds be disbursed without bias or discrimination of any kind. Certified Residences will be crucial to the safety of those residing in them and as a professional in the Mental Health and Addiction field I could know that there is some oversight and precautions being taken for those who might be considered vulnerable.

In closing, I would like to thank the committee for your time and urge you to vote Ought to Pass. I am willing to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Karen Hardy