

Hearing: APRIL 6th at 9 AM!

**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 Theresa Masticolo, and I am a resident of Camden, Maine. I am the manager of 63 Washington, a women's recovery residence in Camden. We are MARR certified, and have been since our inception in 2018. I am also a person in recovery, which to me means being of service to my community while helping all that are affected by addiction.

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 ensures 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.

Since our house has opened its doors, we have helped women achieve solid, long-term recovery while reacclimating to work and family responsibilities. While living here, my residents volunteer and work in the community, and some stay here in this county to live and work after they move out. Often when a resident arrives, they need help paying rent while they settle in and find work. We have never successfully had a resident receive any help from the General Assistance Fund. They have been made to feel like they are not worthy of receiving help. Rules for qualifying seem ever changing and unattainable. Financial worries are a huge stressor in early recovery, and this leads to a resident attempting to work too many hours or take a stressful job – both things we caution against in early recovery.

The Mid-Coast Recovery Coalition has worked tirelessly to be certified by the Maine Association of Recovery Residences and is actively working with MARR to ensure that more residences will follow our lead. This licensing ensures that our facility is doing our absolute best to not only help our residents, but also to remain a contributing member of our community.

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,

Theresa Masticolo