



Maine Association of  
Recovery Residences

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

April 6, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Health & Human Services Committee, my name is Alison Webb, and I am a resident of Portland. I'm a recovery ally and an affected family member. I'm also the President of the Board of Directors of the Maine Association of Recovery Residences (MARR), and it is in that capacity that I am here today to testify in favor of LD 964, *An Act to Expand Access to Certified Substance Use Disorder Recovery Residence Services*.

The MARR Board of Directors has met and discussed this bill, and they are unanimous in their support.

MARR is a grassroots non-nonprofit organization started by dedicated volunteers in 2016. Since then, the organization has grown to support two fulltime staff who certify and re-certify houses and manage everyday operations. The majority of our Board are people in recovery who have on-the-ground experience living in, owning, and managing recovery residences. Our funding is primarily from the State of Maine, as well as from certification fees and small private grants.

MARR's mission is to promote the ethical and sustainable management of high-quality recovery residences throughout Maine. MARR is the only organization in Maine that certifies residences based on the national standards of the National Alliance of Recovery Residences.

Recovery residences run on the "social model" of recovery, which means the environment in the house is as close to normal residential life as possible. Residents learn how to share in decision-making, they do chores, they find employment or volunteer opportunities, they go to school, and, most importantly, they support each other. They learn how to live with their peers in a community after years of addiction, isolation, and sometimes jail or prison.

Recovery residences are safe places for people in early recovery. Relapse prevention is a priority, which means living in a substance-free environment, learning how to cope with difficult life situations without drugs or alcohol and developing new, healthy habits of daily living. The people in recovery residences are on a journey together to wellness.

Recovery residences provide much more than just a bed, and that's why our slogan is, "Hope, Not Hotels." A hotel room is no comparison to the structure, participatory living, opportunities to gain new skills in work and school, and peer support and love that a recovery residence provides.

MARR supports LD 964 as one way to ensure equitable access to high quality recovery housing *for everyone* in Maine, including people who can't afford it themselves. LD 964 also creates accountability for tax dollars by requiring recovery residences that receive public funding to be certified.

We believe LD 964 is the next step in developing Maine's recovery support services and ensuring quality housing for people living in recovery residences.

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,

Alison Jones Webb  
President  
Board of Directors