



295 Water St.  
Augusta, Maine 04330

**Testimony in Favor of LD 488:  
A Resolve to Expand Recovery Community Organizations Throughout Maine**

April 12th, 2021

Dear Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Courtney Allen. I am a resident of Augusta and the Policy Director for the Maine Recovery Advocacy Project. ME-RAP is a grassroots network of people across Maine working to redefine and reimagine justice, access, connection, and recovery from substance use. One of our true north organizing principles at ME-RAP is that we listen to our community and then we act. Our community includes people in recovery, people who use drugs, family members, and all of our allies.

Today, I am here to testify in favor of LD 488: A Resolve to Expand Recovery Community Organizations Throughout Maine. One of the things that I want to reiterate today is that LD 488 is a direct ask from the recovery community - a community that has been on the front lines of the addiction crisis taking care of each other for a very long time. Recovery support services are not a new concept. It has been an integral part of our culture for decades. More recently, the concept has been formalized, researched<sup>1&2</sup>, and supported through state and federal funding sources.

We want to thank the committee for your investment in our community during the 128th Legislative Session, resulting in seven centers opening across the state. We also want to thank Gov. Janet Mills, Gordon Smith, and the Department of Health and Human Services for their commitment to our community.

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<sup>1</sup> Recovery community centers: Characteristics of new attendees and longitudinal investigation of the predictors and effects of participation, John Kelly, 2021, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33771284/>

<sup>2</sup> New kid on the block: An investigation of the physical, operational, personnel, and service characteristics of recovery community centers in the United States, John Kelly, 2020, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32087832/>



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They have worked tirelessly to involve our community in the decisions that impact us, to find more funding for centers, and by making recovery community centers a priority in the recently released [2021 Strategic Action Plan](#). We could not have better allies at the state level on this issue and we are grateful for all of you.

That being said, we still have seven counties that do not have access to a recovery community center. One of those counties is mine - Kennebec County. I will allow other members of this community to talk to you about the impact not having a center is having but I do want to briefly touch on the fact that the City of Augusta is ready to welcome a recovery community center. In early 2021, the City Council unanimously adopted a city goal to help support “making Augusta a recovery ready community”, and we have a strong network of people in recovery and allies who are committed to ensuring that people in or seeking recovery are celebrated and welcomed in the capital of Maine.

And no matter what happens with this particular resolve, I am proud of our community for their fierce advocacy on this issue. I am sure that this conversation will continue and we are here for it.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Thank you,  
Courtney Allen