



Testimony of Nicole Proctor, Maine Recovery Hub Director at Portland Recovery Community Center

In Support of

LD 488: "A Resolve To Expand Recovery Community Organizations Throughout Maine"

Good afternoon Senator Claxton, Rep Meyer, and distinguished members of the Committee of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Nicole Proctor. I have the privilege of serving as Director of the Maine Recovery Hub at Portland Recovery Community Center. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of LD 488 "A Resolve To Expand Recovery Community Organizations Throughout Maine".

Through my work at PRCC, which serves as Maine's Recovery Hub, supporting 12 other recovery community centers around our state with technical assistance and training, I have had the privilege to witness how these centers have begun to transform their communities. Through public education, advocacy, and peer support, recovery community centers are helping to break the stigma associated with substance use disorders and help people find and sustain recovery.

The recovery movement, growing in 1990's, is a national movement supporting the creation of grassroots Recovery Community Organizations to advocate for meaningful representation of people in recovery, to educate the public and policy makers, and to celebrate the multiple pathways to and stages of recovery. In 2007, peer recovery support services, were recognized as an evidence-based practice model, which is now being offered at hundreds of RCO's across the country, with only 13 here in Maine, we need more.

Last year, during a global pandemic, at nine of the centers in Maine, nearly 7000 meetings, groups and activities were offered with over 55,000 attendees. Recovery community centers in Maine made over 18,000 telephone recovery support calls to almost 700 individuals, and recovery coaches at centers held 2,400 coach sessions with more than 400 individuals. These peer recovery support services are helping to save lives, give hope, and offer connection that is so crucial in the recovery process.

I have not only seen how RCO's transform communities, but have been transformed myself – PRCC has changed my life and the lives of many that I love. As a person in long-term recovery from substance use disorder, I walked through the doors of PRCC as a very different person than I am today. The staff welcomed me, offered me coffee and kindness, and made me feel a part of something for the first time in many years. As a person in early recovery then, I felt I had little to offer anyone, especially my community. The PRCC encouraged and supported me, helping me to understand I am so much more than my past, and that my future could be bright and purposeful. Today I live a life I could never have dreamed of, coming from a town in Maine with no recovery supports, I had to move to Portland to find the recovery community I so desperately needed. My hope is that recovery community centers can be available to everyone in Maine, no matter where they live.

I ask that you invest in our people, our families, and our communities to provide hope and support to build recovery ready communities across Maine. I thank you for listening to the many voices of recovery today and ask you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 488. Thank you.

Nicole Proctor,

Director of the Maine Recovery Hub

Portland Recovery Community Center