



295 Water St.  
Augusta, Maine 04330

Monday, April 12th, 2021

Good afternoon Senator Claxton, Rep Meyer, and distinguished members of the Committee on Health and Human Services,

My Name is Chelsea Putnam. I am a resident of Houlton, Maine and a person in long-term recovery which to me means that today I am a mother to my daughters and an advocate for recovery in my community. About a year ago, I really found myself and my support team by going to the local Recovery Center (ARCH). Now, I work hard every day to better myself and the community I live in. Today, Almost two years into recovery I have my own apartment, an amazing job, I am part of some amazing organizations and recently started school for my CADC. Recovery has completely changed my life and has created so many opportunities for me. I am where I am because my community helped me get there.

I also organize with the Maine Recovery Advocacy Project (ME-RAP) in an effort to ensure people who are directly impacted by the opioid crisis and the war on drugs have a voice in their state and local governments. Which is why I am coming before you today...

I am here to testify in favor of LD 488: A Resolve to Expand Recovery Community Centers Throughout Maine. Bringing Recovery Centers to the counties that do not have them already would make a huge impact in many ways. The number of overdose deaths alone should show how badly these centers are needed all over the state. The opposite of Addiction is Connection and that is exactly what Recovery Centers create. Communities are built inside the walls of these centers, and everyday they make room for positive change in people's lives. Without my recovery Center I may not be where I am today. ARCH has given me a purpose, a support system and a whole new way of life and I want that chance for others all over Maine as well.

As we move forward past this dark time of isolation, now more than ever the recovery community will need places to come together to heal and connect. Recovery community centers are those spaces.

Please, Recognize the needs of people who use drugs, people in recovery, and those affected by substance use disorder. Recovery Community Centers would make a huge, long lasting difference for our communities and are a step in the right direction! Thank you for giving me this time to speak about the centers, because they have given me and many others a place to call home.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Chelsea Putnam  
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