

Annick McIntosh
Westbrook, ME
LD 1582

Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Annick McIntosh, and I live in Westbrook, Maine. I am a former employee of North Spore Mushroom company, a second year Interfaith Chaplaincy student at the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine, a volunteer with Decriminalize Maine, and small business owner. I support LD1582 The Act to Enact the Maine Psilocybin Services Act.

I've struggled with anxiety and lacked a sense of purpose and belonging for decades. I credit psilocybin mushrooms with creating a sense of equanimity and belonging to myself and my community.

I came into relationship with mushrooms four years ago. While my first few experiences with mushrooms were perspective shifting, it wasn't until 2020 when I took a large dose of mushrooms that I experienced a radical inner transformation. I felt called to serve my community, bear witness to other people's suffering, and align my life's purpose with my values. Within a year, I had become a student at the Chaplaincy Institute of Maine with a self-professed focus on psychedelic chaplaincy. I began volunteering in my community and joined Decriminalize Maine to support efforts to decriminalize plant and fungi psychedelic use. I credit psilocybin with softening my judgement, my self-criticism, and increasing my ability to empathize and act compassionately. I credit psilocybin with opening uncomfortable doors in my psyche and forcing me to examine parts of my life that were not in alignment with who I was and who I wanted to be. I credit psilocybin for increasing my capacity to love and be loved.

Over the past year, I have watched as a Psychedelic Chaplaincy network has formed here in the US, with clergy becoming involved in psychedelic therapy and research efforts. I am excited at the possibility of holistic psychedelic care that includes not only psychiatrists, psychotherapists, and doctors but also ministers, pastors, and chaplains.

I have also watched over the past year the formation of the Fireside Project, a Psychedelic Peer Support line for folks who are actively using psychedelics and in need of support. I have witnessed first hand the effects of deep listening, unconditional support, and gentle assurance for those who are needing care during a psilocybin journey. The Maine Psilocybin Services Act would create a much needed formal pathway for folks who are seeking a safe and supportive environment to explore the therapeutic power of psilocybin.