



**Testimony Before the Joint Standing Committee on
Health and Human Services on LD 524**

An Act to Start a Pilot Program for Medical Substitution Treatment
in a Local Community Setting

April 24, 2015

Senator Brakey, Representative Gattine, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Paul Nicklas and I am the Assistant City Solicitor for the City of Bangor. I am testifying on behalf of the City of Bangor in support of LD 524, an Act to Start a Pilot Program for Medical Substitution Treatment in a Local Community Setting.

The support from the City of Bangor grows out of the significant efforts the Bangor community has been making to improve drug treatment and recovery in the City and the surrounding region. To help you understand the efforts of that community, I have provided a copy of a report generated by the Substance Abuse Working Group in Bangor which is slated to be adopted by the Bangor City Council as its formal recommendations on Monday.

LD 524 would establish a pilot program for medication assisted treatment of narcotic addiction, using methadone or other pharmacologic agents providing similar benefits in a rural location at least 30 miles from a current methadone setting.

If services were provided in rural areas, individuals would not have to leave their communities to obtain medication substitution treatment, making it easier for them to maintain employment and support. It is estimated this proposal would also result in transportation cost savings, as the State would no longer be required to transport clients to distant communities for recovery services.

These transportation savings would be used in funding the rural medical services or mobile services that would be provided. Aside from the cost savings benefit, this program offers a more humane way to deliver addiction treatment services by treating individuals close to their homes. It is for these reasons that the City of Bangor urges this committee to pass LD 524. Thank you, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

