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STATE OF MAINE  
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Date: February 20, 2025  
To: Senator Craig V. Hickman  
Representative Anne-Marie Mastraccio  
Members, Government Oversight Committee  
From: Senator Henry Ingwersen HI (AFB)  
Representative Michele Meyer MM (AFB)  
Members, Health and Human Services Committee

We write to update the Government Oversight Committee of the Health and Human Services Committee’s activities regarding child welfare. As our legislative jurisdiction includes child welfare, we have been, and continue to be, active in our oversight of the Department of Health and Human Services, including the Office of Child and Family Services.

Since 2022, the Committee has held quarterly meetings on child welfare pursuant to Resolve 2022, chapter 142 and Public Law 2023, chapter 261. These ongoing quarterly meetings are statutorily required, and we take this responsibility seriously. The quarterly meetings include the Director of the Office of Child and Family Services, the Child Welfare Ombudsman, as well as representatives from the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Panel, Maine Child Welfare Advisory Panel, and Justice for Children Task Force. At our last quarterly meeting, we also heard from the Maine Commission on Public Defense Services, Parents’ Counsel Division. In addition to the quarterly meetings, this session, we have asked Director Bobbi Johnson of OCFS to come before us twice a month to discuss specific issues raised by Committee members and issues that arise within the Department. Director Johnson’s next briefing is on Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> at 10am. We would like to extend an invitation to any and all members of the Government Oversight Committee to attend these meetings and briefings.

Our Committee members, along with all other members of the 131<sup>st</sup> and 132<sup>nd</sup> Legislature, are grateful for the work on child welfare that your Committee has undertaken. The Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability has done sterling work in its case file reviews and reports on oversight, investigations and reunification. In addition, the recommendations from the Government Oversight Committee’s draft report on reforms have been a topic of discussion in our Committee (including via recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Commission to Study the Organization of and Service Delivery by the Department of Health and Human Services). Under the statute, the Government Oversight Committee has

wide-ranging oversight of program evaluation across agencies and departments within State government along with local government and quasi-agencies. We believe that, going forward, we are best positioned to take the lead on legislative oversight of the child welfare system.

cc: Peter Schleck, Director, Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability