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LD 473

I have worked in the field of Intellectual Disabilities for over 25 years, and have seen the positive and negative impacts of how funding and supports affect individual and family lives. It can create significant barriers to basic health and safety and it can provide opportunities for people to develop lives that offer. Resolve, to expand the Eligibility for and Increase the Number of Hours of Applied Behavior Analysis is a necessary and important bill.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is evidence based, and has proven results in improving the quality of individual lives – while reducing the cost of other supports. Individuals in need of behavior analysis are struggling and without these supports have a bleak outlook on changing without ABA services. With behavior analysis they have the opportunity to learn adaptive skills – which is proven and successful treatment often with significant positive impacts on their quality of life. Children are offered ABA and then abandoned by the treatment system when their needs as an adult supersede the amount of available hours, or they don't have the right funding to even obtain ABA services. As adults, if provided with adequate ABA and other supports, individuals can become engaged and giving members of the community. We need more hours for ABA support, we need to increase the available BCBA's to provide that support and we need to provide the right to adequate treatment. This is the ethically correct path to take to support our Maine people.