

IN SUPPORT OF LD 472
***"An Act to Support Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic
Projects"***

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and honorable members of the Health & Human Services Committee,

I'm Danielle Parent, Chief Growth Officer at Sweetser and I'm here today to testify in support of LD 472, "An Act to Support Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic Projects". I want to begin by thanking representative Madigan for sponsoring this bill which provides a safeguard to community providers and supports the continuity of care for individuals across the state.

A Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic or CCBHC is a federally endorsed service delivery model. CCBHCs provide one stop access to comprehensive mental health and substance use treatment in the community. The CCBHC model establishes core service and quality standards, promotes improved access and integration of care, and is supported by a Prospective Payment System (PPS).

In recent years, six behavioral health organizations across the state have been awarded federal grants to develop and implement the CCBHC model in Maine. As a result of these grants, we have seen increased access to care, more training opportunities for clinicians in evidence-based practices, improved coordination of care between providers, and more. Sweetser currently operates a CCBHC out of our Brunswick office.

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has been active in state planning efforts to develop CCBHC in Maine; working collaboratively with providers to design a system that will better help the needs of our communities. We appreciate this process and their leadership on this front. We feel confident in their ability to see this through.

While the department works to develop and implement a statewide model, some providers may see their current grants and funding end before this work is fully completed and the state is ready to go. In order to avoid a disruption of care for clients and to prevent program closures right when these programs are needed most, providers need some type of bridge or 'gap' funding.

The amended bill before you seeks to do just that. It's a critical backstop and security blanket for providers worried about any delays in the Maine Care implementation timeline. Thank you for your time and attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

Danielle Parent JD, LCSW
Chief Growth Officer