

Written Testimony In Re: LD 659, An Act to Promote Seamless and Flexible Home and Community Supports Across the Lifespan for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities or Autism

April 10, 2023

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

I am writing neither for nor against LD 659, since it is currently too early to assess the services, scope, budget and functions that will be put forth in such a broad and far-reaching effort to shift service delivery for people currently receiving or eligible to receive MaineCare Sections 21 and Section 29.

My name is Jennifer Putnam, Executive Director at Waypoint (formerly Waban). Waypoint has been delivering services to children and adults with disabilities for over five decades. From special purpose preschool services to aging in place for our oldest adult members, we provide a wide range of caring and supportive services in Southern Maine. We also provide children's and adult case management through Targeted Case Management (TCM) MaineCare Section 13, as well as Children's Care Coordination as part of MaineCare Section 92, Behavioral Health Home. We have a significant depth of understanding about services for children and adults with a variety of intellectual, developmental, behavioral health and autism diagnoses after having provided services for so long to individuals and families in Maine.

I have the honor of sitting on the Maine Developmental Services Oversight and Advisory Board, the State's Mortality Review Panel (for deaths and serious injuries to people receiving HCBS services) and the Board of Directors for Maine Association for Community Service Providers (MACSP). Most pertinent currently, I am a member of the Lifespan Waiver Stakeholder Committee, comprised of parents, self-advocates, OADS and other state representatives, and interested community partners. Maine is clearly trying to address longstanding needs for better transitions, streamlined services and better access to services for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

My comments today are not centered on the content of the proposed new waiver or its possible services, because at this point in the waiver's development, it is too soon to weigh in on most of it. What I would like to focus on, though, is the significance of this waiver as a re-design for all the services children and adults currently rely on to get their health, safety, functional, spiritual, and other needs met. As a state and as a group of caring and concerned people, we cannot afford to get this wrong. We have one opportunity to bring forward a vision of care and supportive services that will meet the needs of everyone across the continuum not only of the lifespan, but across the vast differences in levels of need for services. Because of this, it is critical that we treat the Lifespan Waiver proposal with the understanding of the deep and lasting impact the new Waiver will have on people with intellectual disabilities in Maine, and



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acknowledge that this is clearly a major, substantive piece of legislation and should be treated as such. There is much at stake, not only in the impact of the new waiver, but also the impact of ending of the current two waivers, Section 21 and 29, which have served the needs of the most vulnerable for many years.

There are a multitude of unanswered questions at such an early stage in the process of re-imagining services for thousands of vulnerable people. We owe it to them to ensure we approach it thoughtfully and carefully. Please vote to make this bill major substantive.

Thank you for reading this testimony and I am available to clarify my testimony or answer any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

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