

Lisa Wesel
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LD 659

To Sen. Baldacci, Rep. Meyers and the members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Lisa Wesel, and I serve on the Lifespan Waiver Stakeholder Committee. I am also the mother of an adult daughter with IDD who is on the perpetual waitlist for Sec. 21.

I am writing to urge you to amend LD 659 to be permanently Major Substantive, NOT Routine Technical.

I think the Lifespan Waiver holds great promise for Mainers with IDD. I like the idea of a seamless system of care that expands and contracts as a person's needs change over the course of their life. I like the flexibility it affords the state to try new support systems, like self-direction. And I particularly like the idea of no more waitlists.

The Lifespan Waiver represents a complete 180 from the failing system we have now, which is why I think it absolutely needs to be amended to be permanently "Major Substantive." This is not a minor tweaking of an existing system of care -- it is a complete overhaul that includes discontinuing the two major waivers (Sec. 29 and Sec. 21) -- that currently serve adults with IDD. It includes implementing the SIS in a way that has not been done before in Maine and which has not even been outlined yet. There are too many unanswered questions and missing details to just approve this new waiver wholesale without giving it the proper vetting it deserves before the Legislature, which will be possible only if you treat it as Major Substantive.

I urge you to make that amendment.

Thank you.