

Ryan Gallant
Gallant Therapy Services
LD 744

Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Ryan Gallant and I am the President of Gallant Therapy Services. We provide a variety of services to children and adults with disabilities and developmental delays. We have offices in Augusta, Lewiston, Oakland, and Hermon.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of LD 744 which would direct DHHS to conduct rate studies in 2024 for MaineCare HCBS Group Home and Community Supports and Community Membership services for people with intellectual disabilities or autism spectrum disorder.

We continually have difficulty with maintaining staff for our community supports program and the chief complaint always returns to the rate of pay. We regularly lose staff to entry level positions in other industries, which is unfortunate because many of these staff have skills and experience in the human services field and a tremendous assets to the people they support.

I appreciate the Department's efforts to invest in workforce development and the cost of living adjustments received to date, and flexibilities to date, however a viable rate, that will sustain a competitive wage, is critical and cannot wait.

Community support services have been a long standing commitment from the Department and our organization to ensure individuals are included and connected to their communities. However, without a rate study that includes data from IDD providers, the future of this service is uncertain.

These Community Support services have a significant impact on the people accessing them. It assists them to develop community relationships, volunteer in their community, develop work skills, etc... For example, we have several individuals with Autism that have developed paid employment after developing relationships as a volunteer at a business.

I urge your support. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ryan Gallant, MOT, OTR/L