

TESTIMONY REGARDING

LD 1309 “An Act to Clarify Requirements for Payment of Tuition for Children with Disabilities by the Department of Education’s Child Development Services System”

April 13, 2023

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, thank you for taking the time to hear testimony on this important bill.

My name is Susan Quinn, and I live in Portland, Maine.

I am asking you to support LD 1309: An Act to Clarify Requirements for Payment of Tuition for Children with Disabilities by the Department of Education's Child Development Services System.

This bill would ensure that community-based special purpose preschool programs receive adequate funding to provide critical early intervention services to young children with developmental disabilities, like my grandson.

My grandson came to live with me when he was two years old. He is a bright, inquisitive and interesting little boy who had a rough start to life and the traumas he experienced have affected his social and emotional development. Before transitioning to kindergarten, he attended Woodfords Preschool for several months. Prior to that, he was shuffled from one preschool to the next because they were unable to adequately support him or provide him with the tools he needed to succeed. In fact to date, Woodfords is the only setting where he has been able to experience growth and success. I am grateful for the early intervention provided by Woodfords Preschool. Their program gave my grandson the support he needed and the opportunity to develop in ways that were not possible for him in a general preschool setting. I believe there is a vital

need for special purpose preschool programs and I implore you to support LD 1309 to give all children with disabilities the early intervention services they need.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our story with you today.