

Darla Chafin
Augusta
LD 744

LD 744 Resolve to Direct the Department of Health and Human Services to Perform Rate Studies and Rate Determinations for Providers of Certain Services for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities or Autism Spectrum Disorder

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services Committee:

My name is Darla Stimpson Chafin and I am the parent and guardian of a 55-year-old daughter with severe disabilities. She has been served by 3 “special” schools, Pineland Center, and 4 group homes.

I am testifying in support of this bill because, above all, we need consistency and clarity in the situation. Starting with rate studies and determinations is the first step. If they are done well, acknowledging the needs and goals of all, it will be an amazing first step. And when used, I think all will be pleased with the long-term effect on finances as well as the people served. With proper training and attitudes, there will be less anger, frustration, even exhaustion for both clients and staff.

We are dealing with human beings, so I know I’ve also asked for something right away... because it affects people, those who work in the system, and those who by necessity live in it to some degree. None of them can be exempted or forgotten. Staff who feel a part of the solutions and realize that they are part of a positive effort will gain the trust of their clients and the clients will realize that they are part of the working unit to the degree they can be. No one does well feeling useless or a nuisance.

Maine can do this. It has done it in little pockets of people. We just need to get things back on an even keel where we respect each other’s worth and honesty, How wonderful if we could look over each other’s shoulders to offer assistance or get a good idea rather than to be suspecting the worst. Fairness and respect come in many ways. An honest evaluation is a start. Please help clear the brush that gathers from isolated and unclear thinking by starting with something concrete and honest, an overdue rate study..

Thank you for giving me this opportunity.