

April 27, 2023

100 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

**Testimony in support of LD 1666 “An Act to Modernize the State Supplement to Supplemental Security Income by Updating the State Supplement and Removing Marriage Disincentives”**

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

My name is Marco Orlando and I live in Brewer. I am a self-advocate and I am the Treasurer on the Board of Speaking Up For Us.

I am someone who lives with a disability so I am on a limited income because of it. I am writing in support of LD 1666. I myself, am not in a position to where I can marry or raise a family. I don't see that happening for me. I would love to see that happen for other people like me. I feel this ties in with my overall beliefs of challenging people's perceptions of what they think people with disabilities are capable of.

I often see people with disabilities settling for less than they deserve because society thinks that is what they can do/deserve. Because of this, a lot of folks miss out on the every day lifestyle that everyone takes for granted of marrying and raising a family.

If that is what a person wants, they should be able to get married without losing income and benefits.

I believe this bill should also further expand on language around the nursing home piece and expand it to people who live in shared living, group homes, etc.

In general, I feel like people should be encouraged to take part in the every day lifestyle that everyone else does. They shouldn't have to risk losing their benefits to do it.

This legislation is a huge step toward leveling the playing field for people like us.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony. I will be available to answer questions by email.

Sincerely,

Marco Orlando

Brewer, ME

[mrorando@yahoo.com](mailto:mrorando@yahoo.com)