



Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine
The unified voice for Maine's community behavioral health providers

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Testimony in Support of LD 1305

"Resolve, to Design and Implement a Community-based Model of Care for Adolescent Mental Health"

Sponsored by Representative Gramlich

April 21, 2023

Good morning Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committees. My name is Malory Shaughnessy and I am the Executive Director of the Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services. The Alliance is the statewide association representing the majority of Maine's community based mental health and substance use treatment providers, providing services to over 80,000 Maine men, women, and children. The Alliance advocates for the implementation of sound policies and evidence-based practices that serve to enhance the quality and effectiveness of our behavioral health care system.

On behalf of the Alliance, I am here today to speak in support of LD 1305, "Resolve, to Design and Implement a Community-based Model of Care for Adolescent Mental Health." First, I'd like to thank Representative Gramlich for her continued work regarding Maine's young people.

This resolve directs the Department of Health and Human Services to design and implement a community-based model of care that addresses the acute mental health needs of adolescents with co-occurring disorders. It appropriates one-time funds of \$965,000 for this purpose. It directs the Department of Health and Human Services to, no later than December 3, 2025, submit to you, the members of the Health and Human Services Committee, a report demonstrating the efficacy of the model of care and sufficient data to aid in the development of a future MaineCare reimbursement rate.

As you've already heard, Representative Gramlich worked with Day One CEO, and Alliance member, Greg Bowers, to create this resolve. Importantly, Day One has been providing services to young people for almost 50 years. They have the experience needed to understand Maine's complex "conundrum of care" for youth. Additionally, Mr. Bowers served alongside me as a member of the Maine Juvenile Justice System Assessment & Reinvestment Task Force.

The Maine Juvenile Justice System Assessment & Reinvestment Task Force report states that, "Maine has had for some time, or has recently established, several community-based programs and services, many of which are excellent. However, one of the most common statements we

heard throughout Maine, from youth and adults, from those inside and outside the juvenile justice system, was that the state still lacks a continuum of community-based programs and services to provide effective supervision of young people without resorting to incarceration.”¹

Young people from all over Maine are in need of substance use disorder treatment, many times due to polysubstance use, and often with accompanying mental health support needs as well. There are enormous gaps in our state when it comes to providing the kind of integrated efforts that are required to meet the complex needs of youth, especially in those services that will provide opportunities for successful integration back into the community with a new opportunity to set a different life trajectory.

The Alliance providers would agree with some of the concerns of Director Landry and OCFS that the time frame might be too short to accomplish the goals in the pilot of this model of care. We would agree that extending it and adding additional funding for the training that would be involved would assure a more successful outcome.

This resolve is a very real step you can take toward providing a remedy for the struggles Maine youth are facing across our state. I urge members to vote ought-to-pass and would be pleased to answer any questions you have for me.

¹ Maine Juvenile Justice System Assessment report. Prepared by the Center for Children’s Law and Policy, the Juvenile Justice Research and Reform Lab at Drexel University, and the Center for the Study of Social Policy February 2020. <https://www.mainejjtaskforce.org/>