

Bates

Counseling & Psychological Services

January 23, 2023

RE: St. Mary's Behavioral Health - Maine LD 2105
Resolve, to Protect and Enhance Access to Behavioral Health
Services in Androscoggin County and Surrounding Communities
Presented by Senator Rotundo of Androscoggin and Representative Cloutier of Lewiston.

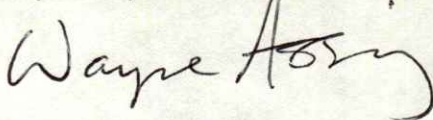
Dear Members of the Maine Legislature,

I am writing to offer my full support for the above bill that seeks to provide emergency funding to support St. Mary's Regional Medical Center expansion of community based psychiatric services in Lewiston by creating a day hospital program serving all the surrounding families and communities in Maine. The plan proposed by St. Mary's to create a Partial Hospital Program/Intensive Outpatient Program is a crucial step addressing a critical gap in services currently. Such critical services are tremendous assets to individuals and families requiring higher levels of care and gaining valuable skills and coping techniques to live more satisfying and meaningful lives.

As the Director of Counseling and Psychological Services at Bates College, I am acutely aware of the scarcity of mental health services that currently exist in the broader community. Given the recent mass shootings in Lewiston, there is a critical need for increased psychiatric assessment and treatment in Maine. This bill sponsored by Senator Rotundo and Representative Cloutier serves to expand the safety net by expanding psychiatric services to serve the psychiatric needs of all Maine residents requiring urgent and ongoing mental health treatment.

I am personally grateful for the presence of St. Mary's in the Lewiston community supporting students who need urgent and critical care. The staff and services have personally benefited many of our students, helping them achieve safety, stability, and eventually return successfully to our community. We are grateful to St. Mary's for their services and professional care.

Respectfully submitted,



Wayne Assing, LCSW
Director of Counseling & Psychological Services