

Randy Moser
Maine Psychological Association
LD 2214

Senator Rotundo
Representative Sachs
Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
5 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Re: Endorsing the Governor's Public Safety and Mental Health Plan

Dear Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs:

The Maine Psychological Association (MePA) is a membership organization representing psychologists who work across the state in private practice, at colleges and universities, and in the public sector. Our mission is to advance psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting health and human welfare.

MePA, Maine's leading psychologists' association, fully supports funding Governor Janet Mills' plan for enhancing public safety and mental health, including:

- Support for Behavioral Health Providers: \$24 million to fund cost-of-living increases for providers through MaineCare, building on previous investments.
- Crisis Response Enhancement: \$950,000 for a crisis receiving center in Lewiston, with ongoing operational funding, and \$2.8 million to strengthen mobile crisis response, supporting a trauma-informed approach and reducing hospitalizations
- Funding for Extreme Risk Protection Order Assessments: \$422,400 to support increased assessments following the tragedy in Lewiston.
- Support for Children in State Care: \$1.3 million for behavioral health services for children in state custody, funding for Therapeutic Intensive Foster Care Homes, foster child assessments, and coordination of high-fidelity wrap-around services.
- Comprehensive Investments in Behavioral Health: Nearly \$20 million allocated for Maine's children's behavioral health plan and health care workforce training
- Behavioral Health Plan for Maine: A strategic approach to improving behavioral health services across the state.

Federal, state, and local mental health advocates and policymakers are increasingly investing in the crisis continuum of care including call centers, mobile crisis teams, and longer-term crisis stabilization facilities, all of which are outlined in the governor's plans.¹ Likewise, behavioral health parity, pre-authorization process review, and cost-of-living adjustments for providers are vital components of the governor's comprehensive strategy and they have MePA's full support.

Sincerely,
Jeff Matranga, Ph.D., ABPP

Board President

1 Hogan, M. F., & Goldman, M. L. (2021). New Opportunities to Improve Mental Health Crisis Systems. *Psychiatric Services* (Washington, D.C.), 72(2), 169-
<https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.202000114>