Maine Developmental Disabilities Council

February 11, 2025

Dear Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services: please accept this testimony in support of LD 51, An Act to Increase Oversight of Fatalities of and Serious Injuries to Adults Subject to Public Guardianship.

The Maine Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC) works in partnership with people with disabilities, parents, advocates, and policy makers to promote independence, integration, and inclusion of all people with disabilities through advocacy, capacity building, and systems change throughout the state of Maine and on the national level.

Under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, MDDC is required to ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages and their families participate in the design of, and have access to, needed community services, individualized support, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion in all facets of family and community life. **MDDC is committed to creating a Maine in which all people are valued and respected because we believe communities are stronger when everyone is included.**

MDDC appreciates Maine's commitment to systemic improvement by examining the circumstances that contribute to deaths and serious injuries through the Aging and Disability Mortality Review Panel. We particularly appreciate several items of this proposal, including
   o   Extending oversight to adults subject to public guardianship. Consider that reporting includes numbers and demographics of people under public guardianship.
   o   Inclusion of a member with lived experience. Consider including stipend for participation.
   o   Inclusion of person adult protective services, especially as APS seems to be siloed from the entities overseeing services.

We appreciate the Department and Representative Shagoury for introducing this legislation.

Rachel Dyer
Maine Developmental Disabilities Council.