



In re: LD 209, An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

Testimony Neither for Nor Against by Jennifer Putnam, Executive Director, Waypoint Maine, Inc.

Good afternoon, Senator Rotundo, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Gattine, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of both the Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Health and Human Services Committees.

I'm Jennifer Putnam, Executive Director of Waypoint, an almost sixty-year-old organization located in southern York County. We serve hundreds of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism, from our pre-K through Grade 5 school to a full range of adult services.

Waypoint serves over 500 children and adults through our case management and care coordination services. As some of you might remember, MaineCare Section 13, Targeted Case management, was one of the first MaineCare sections to receive a rate review and the new rate reflected a less than 5% increase after many years of stagnation. The COLA, then, has been the only way forward for many agencies who, like Waypoint, provide case management services. You might ask "How necessary *are* case management services for people with intellectual disabilities?" Case management services are critical and necessary. Without a case manager, individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities are not able to access any of the Section 21 or Section 29 services they need to be safe, healthy and a part of their community. I ask for you to restore and allocate the funding needed for January 1, 2025, MaineCare service rate cost of living adjustments in the supplemental budget, LD 209.

We have hundreds of employees who rely on us to provide them with a fair wage, and hundreds of members with intellectual disabilities who rely on their case managers and staff, in turn, to access critical supports to stay healthy and safe. We cannot adequately support our clients or our staff without adequate reimbursement rates.

The State of Maine tracks, through provider agency reports, the number of adults with intellectual disabilities in Maine who need case management services, the percent of agencies accepting new clients and the percent of agencies who have staff vacancies. The number of individuals needing case management has exceeded fifty for many quarters, while the number of agencies accepting new clients has plummeted. The percentage of agencies with staff vacancies is notably high.

I urge you to restore and allocate the funding needed for January 1, 2025 MaineCare service rate cost of living adjustments in the supplemental budget, LD 209. This COLA is statutorily required and it is necessary to provide adequate services to Maine's most vulnerable citizens.