



Testimony In Support of LD 46:

An Act to Expand Access to Post-School Programs at Institutes of Higher Education for Students with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities or Autism Spectrum Disorder

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and Distinguished Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. My name is Gay Anne McDonald and I am the Executive Director for the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the MADSEC Legislative Committee pursuant to LD 46: An Act to Expand Access to Post-School Programs at Institutes of Higher Education for Students with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities or Autism Spectrum Disorder. MADSEC provides testimony in strong support of LD 46.

This legislation is a crucial step toward ensuring that students with disabilities in Maine have access to inclusive, supportive, and effective post-secondary education opportunities that set them up for long-term success. Post-school programs at institutions of higher education are essential for students with disabilities, as they provide structured pathways for continued academic, vocational, and independent living skill development. These programs help bridge the gap between high school and adulthood by offering specialized support services, career training, and social engagement opportunities tailored to the needs of students with disabilities. Research shows that students who participate in such programs experience higher rates of employment, greater independence, and improved quality of life. Expanding access to these programs aligns with Maine's commitment to equity and inclusion in education.

Currently, many students with disabilities face significant barriers when transitioning to higher education, including inadequate support services, financial constraints, and limited program availability. By investing in LD 46, Maine can enhance opportunities for all students, ensuring that those with disabilities are not left behind but are instead empowered to reach their full potential.

MADSEC urges you to support LD 46 to create a more inclusive and accessible higher education system in Maine. By doing so, we not only provide opportunities for students with disabilities but also strengthen our communities and workforce by fostering a more diverse and capable population.

Thank you for your time and dedication to empowering young adults with disabilities in Maine.

Respectfully,

Gay Anne McDonald

Executive Director

Lesley Snyer, RSU 89, President
Dr. Deb Murphy, RSU 2, President- Elect
Jody Raymond, Stillwater Academy, Vice President
Angela Moore, Brewer School Dept., Secretary
Cheryl Mercier, RSU 18, Treasurer
Kathy Hamblen, Gorham School Dept., Past President

49 Community Dr., #1
Augusta, ME 04330
gmcdonald@madsec.org
www.madsec.org