

“An Act to Provide Funding for Sexual Assault Services”

Testimony in Support of LD 117

February 25, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and Members of Health and Human Services Committee:

My name is Kate Bozeman, and I am a resident of Freeport. I am currently employed as an Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division of the Office of the Attorney General, but prior to this role I was the Deputy District Attorney of Prosecutorial III. As the DDA, I was responsible for prosecuting all felony crimes of sexual assault in Androscoggin County. I write today as a citizen in support of LD 117.

I have seen firsthand the impact that victim advocates have on the State’s ability to hold perpetrators of sexual abuse accountable. I can say without hesitation that any successes I’ve had as a prosecutor handling these cases would not have been possible if it weren’t for the advocates working tirelessly to support victims through the unimaginably daunting criminal justice process. I have also heard from many survivors over the years that the support they received from advocates helped give them the strength they needed to testify and confront their abusers in a room full of strangers. A sexual assault advocate’s role is nothing short of vital.

Despite being such a crucial part of our response to sexual abuse, advocates receive woefully inadequate compensation. Many of the dedicated advocates I know must take on second jobs to support their families, all while also being almost constantly available to survivors that need them. They don’t get paid overtime. They don’t get bonuses. They are not adequately compensated for the hard and important work that they do, and yet they continue to do it because of how deeply they care. They should not have to do this work and constantly fear that their livelihoods are at stake due to lack of funding.

For these reasons, I wholeheartedly support LD 117.

/s/ Katherine Bozeman /s/

Katherine Bozeman

