



February 25, 2025

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

My name is Kathleen Auclair and I am the Office and Event Coordinator at the Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center, serving Kennebec and Somerset counties. I have been with the organization for 10 years, and while much of my role is administrative, I also answer hotline calls and witness firsthand the invaluable work of our advocates.

Survivors consistently express their gratitude for having an advocate by their side—whether filing protection from abuse orders, navigating the court system, or undergoing forensic exams at the hospital. I have seen thank-you notes come in for the advocates who get out of bed in the middle of the night to sit with a survivor for hours, reminding them that they are not alone and that what happened to them is not their fault. This support is critical to their healing process and often gives them the courage to seek justice.

Yet, despite the vital role they play, many advocates are forced to leave for higher-paying jobs due to financial strain. The emotional toll of this work is immense, and burnout is common, but inadequate wages make retention even more difficult. The passage of LD 117 would help ensure that those doing this essential work are fairly compensated, reducing turnover and strengthening the support system for survivors.

For me personally, a wage increase would mean greater financial stability for my family and the ability to continue serving in a role I am deeply passionate about. I urge you to support LD 117 and invest in the future of sexual assault services in Maine.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kathleen Auclair
Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center

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