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Senator Henry Ingwersen, Chair
Representative Michele Meyer, Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services
Cross Office Building, Room 209
Augusta, Maine 04333

*Re: LD 834: An Act to Update the State Supplement to
Supplemental Security Income*

Dear Senator Ingerswen, Representative Meyer, and Members of the
Committee on Health and Human Services:

My name is Josh Weidemann and I am a self-advocate from Lewiston
Maine. I am here to testify in support to LD 834: An Act to Update the State
Supplement to Supplemental Security Income.

Right now, people with disabilities lose money from their Social Security
benefits just because they get married. That is unfair, and this bill will help
fix it.

I was almost married. I was with my fiancé for five years, and we were
ready to take the next step—but when we learned that doing so would
cause me to lose most of my Social Security income, we had to rethink
everything. Simply because I have a disability, getting married would have
put my financial security at risk. No one should have to choose between the
person they love and the support they need to survive.

The marriage penalty is a huge barrier for adults with disabilities who want
to build a life with their partner. Social Security benefits are already very
limited, and the moment we get married, we are forced to say goodbye to
much of that support. LD840 will help more married couples with disabilities
qualify for State SSI benefits. It also works toward a better system—one

that helps people afford basic needs, instead of punishing them for finding love.

If people without disabilities can get married without losing their income, why can't we? This is a civil rights issue. Marriage should be a choice made out of love, not fear of losing financial stability.

Please support LD 840 and help fix this unfair system.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joshua Weidemann