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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 800: An Act to Fund the Provision of Advocacy Services to  
Persons with Intellectual Disabilities*

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

I am here to testify in support to LD 800: An Act to Fund the Provision of  
Advocacy Services to Persons with Intellectual Disabilities.

My name is Josh Weidemann, and I am here today to ask for your support  
to increase funding for the Disability Services Advocacy (DSA) team at  
Disability Rights Maine (DRM).

The work they do is critical to protecting the rights of people with disabilities  
across Maine, and I know this firsthand because they have helped me  
personally.

When I was being denied the housing modifications I needed, DRM  
stepped in. Federal guidance says a person must either own their home or  
live with family before they can make modifications—but that didn't work for  
me. DRM took my case, filed a complaint, and stood by my side through  
three mediation sessions. Thanks to their advocacy, we reached a  
settlement that provided me with a single-person placement. Without  
DRM's support, I don't know what I would have done.

DRM's DSA team is vital because they ensure that Mainers with disabilities  
have access to the services and supports we need to live independently

and with dignity. They fight for our civil rights, hold systems accountable, and help people navigate complex barriers to the resources they deserve. But they can't do this work without adequate funding.

I urge you to support LD 800 so DRM's DSA team can continue to provide the critical advocacy that so many people, like me, rely on.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joshua Weidemann