

Vicki Delong
Aroostook County
LD 875

Testimony of Vicki Delong

In Support of LD 875, An Act to Fund Essential Services for Victims of Domestic Violence Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
March 19, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Vicki Delong, I am from Aroostook County, and I am writing to share why support for this critical funding is so important.

I have been employed by the State of Maine Office of Child and Family Services for nearly 30 years. During that time, I have had the privilege of witnessing the profound effect the services provided by Hope and Justice has had on the community and families we serve. Over the last decade, the number of families involved with child welfare due to exposure to domestic violence has dramatically increased. The domestic violence liaison in our office has been a vital addition and resource in supporting us to meet the immediate and long-term safety needs of these families. In addition to working with the domestic violence liaison through the stages of the case, I have observed the work of multiple staff at the Hope and Justice Project. The staff have demonstrated a wide variety of skills in a number of areas to meet the needs of their clients. They are responsible for intervening in a crisis situation, safety planning, outreach and education, assistance in navigating the court system, and supporting clients in overcoming day to day challenges. In addition to their duties, they are continuously exposed to traumatic situations that make them vulnerable to negative effects of secondary trauma.

Hope and Justice Project provides an invaluable service to our community. The prevention work alone that they conduct in schools and in community events is remarkable. The networking and resourcefulness of this agency and their staff is commendable. They are an integral component to a large system that meets the needs of the most vulnerable in our society. Funding to this organization is a critical component to ensuring the safety and well-being of all.

Sincerely,
Vicki Delong