



**TESTIMONY OF GLBTQ LEGAL ADVOCATES & DEFENDERS  
IN SUPPORT OF  
LD 875, AN ACT TO FUND ESSENTIAL SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE**

Committee on Health and Human Services

March 19, 2025

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

GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD Law) is a nonprofit legal organization that works in New England and nationally to create a just society free of discrimination based on gender identity and expression, HIV status, and sexual orientation. We appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of LD 875, An Act to Fund Essential Services for Victims of Domestic Violence.

Domestic Violence Resource Centers provide important services for survivors of domestic violence and abuse. DVRCs help survivors navigate complex civil and legal processes, obtain safe and stable housing, protect their children, and more. Communities depend on domestic violence advocates to support survivors and their families. Indeed, demand for DVRC services is rising. According to the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence, calls to DVRC crisis helplines have increased 22 percent since 2019, and a larger proportion of calls are coming from friends and family of survivors who are concerned about ongoing abuse and seeking support to do their part.<sup>1</sup>

State funding for these essential services is vital for so many Mainers. About 239,000 women and 214,000 men in Maine experience sexual violence, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetimes.<sup>2</sup> Even more face psychological aggression and coercive control.<sup>3</sup> National data show that LGBTQ+ adults “bear a disproportionately high burden” of sexual violence and intimate partner violence compared to their non-LGBTQ+ peers.<sup>4</sup> Transgender people are especially likely to experience emotional abuse, physical violence,

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<sup>1</sup> Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence, Domestic Violence Advocacy in Maine, 2024 - 2019: A Story in Numbers (2025).

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 State Report (2023), at 74 (women), 86 (men), <https://www.cdc.gov/nisvs/documentation/NISVS-2016-2017-State-Report-508.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at 66–73.

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Victimization by Sexual Identity (2023), at 1, <https://www.cdc.gov/nisvs/documentation/nisvsReportonSexualIdentity.pdf>.

sexual violence, stalking, and intimate partner violence.<sup>5</sup> These threats to transgender people “start[] early in life” and “last[] throughout their lives.”<sup>6</sup>

DVRCs need support from the State to keep their doors open and keep serving the Mainers who need it most, including Mainers in the LGBTQ+ community. GLAD Law respectfully urges this committee to support LD 875.

Sincerely,

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<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*