

**Testimony**  
**In Support of**  
**LD 117**  
**An Act to Provide Funds for Sexual Assault Services**

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

**My name is John Shattuck. I am a retired citizen of  
Newcastle, Maine.**

**I am providing this written testimony in support of  
LD 117.**

**More than 20 years ago, I served as the Director  
for the Baxter Compensation Authority (BCA); an  
agency established by the 120<sup>th</sup> Legislature to  
adjudicate claims of those former students of the  
Governor Baxter School for the Deaf who were  
physically and sexually abused while attending the**

**school. During the time of the Authority's allotted term (2002-2006), 340 claims of abuse were found eligible, paying approximately \$17.5 million in reparation.**

**Those who were involved at the onset of services; Board of Trustees, Adjudicators, and staff of the BCA, were aware of the challenges before us. We were somewhat prepared to understand and appreciate the impact that physical abuse had on these former students; however, we were not prepared to grasp the stunning horrors and devastating destruction of those students who suffered sexual abuse.**

**As ambitious as this undertaking was, none of responsibilities set before us could have been accomplished without the involvement of those who provided the advocacy and emotional support to those former students who had suffered. Their contribution was invaluable to us all. It was during this time that I gained the respect, admiration, and**

**appreciation of those who choose work that provides advocacy to those who have suffered and been traumatized by sexual abuse. They are true heroes in every sense of the word. It is difficult to prove the impact of absence, but I would suggest that from a public health policy standpoint; the cost of not providing adequate support to those who have suffered would far exceed the amount requested in this bill. Please take this opportunity to recognize the value of these advocates to our health system by passing LD 117.**