

Stephanie Brock
Portland
LD 117

My name is Stephanie Brock, and I am writing as a survivor, an advocate, and a board member of the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MECASA). I did not choose to be harassed or assaulted. I did not choose to see my friends go through the same. But I did choose to speak out. I chose to demand change, to fight for survivors, and to ensure that no one has to navigate this trauma alone. LD 117 is about making sure the help survivors need is there when they need it.

Sexual assault service providers offer free, confidential support that helps people heal and move forward. But these critical services are at risk—underfunded, overburdened, and struggling to keep up with growing demand. More survivors are reaching out than ever before, and instead of being met with immediate care, they are being put on waitlists. That is unacceptable. When someone has the courage to ask for help, there should be help to give.

At the same time, the people doing this work—providing counseling, crisis intervention, and prevention education—are making around \$37,000 per year. They are essential workers, saving lives and protecting communities, yet they are being forced out of the field because they cannot afford to stay. If we value this work, we must fund it accordingly.

LD 117 is not just an investment in survivors—it is an investment in public safety. Prevention programs in schools, workplaces, and communities teach consent, healthy relationships, and bystander intervention. These programs stop violence before it happens. But without funding, we are leaving prevention efforts under-resourced and reactive instead of proactive.

Maine has a choice: invest in survivors or fail them. This is not about whether we can afford to fund these services—it is about whether we choose to. Survivors are watching.

I urge you to fully fund LD 117—because survivors deserve better, those doing this work deserve better, and Maine must do better. Thank you.