

03/17/2025

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

My name is Stephanie DeRedin, and I am a practicing Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE) nurse living in Belfast, Maine. I provide care for patients from across the state in the hospital where I work. I am writing to urge you to support LD 117, which provides increased funding for sexual assault advocates in the State of Maine. These dedicated professionals play a critical role in providing crisis intervention, emotional support, and legal assistance to survivors of sexual violence. Unfortunately, many advocates face significant challenges due to insufficient funding, high caseloads, and legal barriers that limit their ability to serve those in need effectively.

I have had the great pleasure of working along side sexual assault advocates during some of the most difficult sexual assault exams. I have watched as our patients come in for exams during some of the most frightening and traumatizing times of their lives and they have been met with kindness and grace, no matter the time of day.

I respectfully request that you champion legislation that increases state funding for sexual assault advocacy programs to ensure that each survivor receive timely and comprehensive support that is so greatly needed to aid in their recovery.

Your leadership and support in this matter would have a profound impact on the lives of survivors, advocates and the dedicated professionals who assist them. By supporting LD117 to ensure funding that prioritize sexual assault advocacy, Maine can set a strong example in addressing this critical issue and fostering safer communities.

I appreciate your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and provide additional insight on the importance of advocacy programs in our state. Please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Stephanie DeRedin, RN, MBA, BSN, SANE-A, SANE-P, ME-SAFE-A, ME-SAFE-P