



3/27/2025

Senator Donna Bailey, Chair  
Representative Kristi Mathieson, Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services  
Cross Office Building, Room 220  
Augusta, Maine 04333

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1055, An Act to Prohibit Discrimination in  
Access to Anatomical Donations and Organ Transplants

Dear Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Members of the Joint Standing  
Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services:

My name is Barrett Littlefield and I am a senior staff attorney at Disability Rights  
Maine. DRM is Maine's designated Protection and Advocacy Agency, and our mission is  
to advance justice and equality by enforcing rights and expanding opportunities for  
people with disabilities in Maine. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in  
support of LD 1055.

Persons with disabilities encounter widespread stigma and prejudice. While the  
Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by  
federally-funded entities, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 expanded the  
scope of said protection, ableism continues to permeate medical decision-making,  
making the often Sisyphean task of accessing necessary medical treatment all the more  
difficult, and occasionally unreachable, for persons with disabilities. Evidence of such  
ableism in the organ transplantation system has been well documented.<sup>1</sup> Self-advocates'  
have made significant progress in the push to end disability discrimination in the  
aforementioned area of medical decision-making;<sup>2</sup> their efforts have supported the

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<sup>1</sup> National Council on Disability, *Organ Transplant Discrimination Against People with Disabilities*. 25 Sept. 2019,  
[www.ncd.gov/report/organ-transplant-discrimination-against-people-with-disabilities](http://www.ncd.gov/report/organ-transplant-discrimination-against-people-with-disabilities);

Ne'eman, Ari, et al. "Organ Transplantation and People With I/DD: A Review of Research, Policy and Next Steps."  
ASAN, policy brief, 2013, [www.autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ASAN-Organ-Transplantation-Policy-Brief\\_3.18.13.pdf](http://www.autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ASAN-Organ-Transplantation-Policy-Brief_3.18.13.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Bunici, Ashley. "A Conversation with Charlotte Woodward: Disability Policy Trailblazer." *NACDD*, 4 Sept. 2024,  
[www.nacdd.org/a-conversation-with-charlotte-woodward-disability-policy-trailblazer](http://www.nacdd.org/a-conversation-with-charlotte-woodward-disability-policy-trailblazer).

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MAINE'S PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY AGENCY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

passage of largely bipartisan legislation aimed at preventing said discrimination in forty states. Nonetheless, negative biases and erroneous assumptions about the worth and quality of life of persons with disabilities continue to prevent persons with disabilities from receiving equal access to life-saving organ transplantation. LD 1055—by defining how and under what circumstances a person may commence a civil action for injunctive or equitable relief when faced with disability discrimination while navigating or seeking to access the organ transplant system—ensures person who are subjected to said discrimination by a health care facility of provider have a clearer path towards justice.

For the foregoing reasons, DRM supports LD 1055, and we urge this Committee to vote ought to pass. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barrett Littlefield', written in a cursive style.

Barrett Littlefield, Esq.  
Senior Staff Attorney  
Disability Rights Maine