

Ryan Quinn
Testimony in support of LD 1060, An Act to Provide Funding to Reduce Stigma for Parents
Seeking Support
April 4, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the committee. My name is Ryan Quinn, a parent participant in the Be There For ME Campaign. I am offering testimony today in support of LD 1060.

It was an honor and privilege to be considered and subsequently interviewed for the Be There for ME campaign. It is a very forward-thinking and very necessary resource that not only serves as a valuable public campaign, but also a wonderful resource hub, where parents and families can start to access supports for a variety of needs via a clean and easy to access website.

Being a parent or caregiver can be beautiful, rewarding, and life changing. What is not often discussed openly is that it can also be challenging, difficult, and isolating. Be There for ME as a campaign helps normalize drawing attention to these challenges that many parents and caregivers face in isolation. To me the campaign, through the integrated stories and media that accompany the information, speaks "that it's ok to say this is hard," "It's ok to ask for help," and "you are not alone." Whether it's mental health challenges, their child's mental health, housing, food, healthcare, or childcare, etc., a hub and campaign like Be There for ME offers supports while validating the challenges that come with being a parent or caregiver. This can help reduce the stigma that often comes with asking for help.

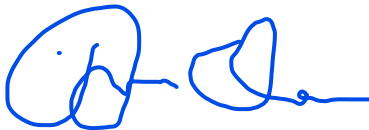
I know this because not only am I a single parent that participated in the campaign, but I also am a Community Service Provider.

I work at The Opportunity Alliance in South Portland, ME - the Community Action Agency for Cumberland County. I can say firsthand that since the launch of the campaign, I have witnessed this resource quickly start to take hold and be shared between providers and is recommended as one of the first resources for many providers to share with families that they work with. It's rare that a week goes by where I don't overhear this campaign recommended or discussed, with most not even realizing I participated in the campaign. Whether in statewide provider meetings where resources are shared, or in my agency's own Community of Practice meetings, this is a resource that has quickly started to be integrated into Community Action. Additionally, this is a wonderful companion resource to the growing "Whole Family" approach that many Community Action Agencies are adopting philosophically.

It can take time for a new resource to take hold, catch wind, grow, and become "normalized" as a trusted resource. Be There for ME has already been able to largely achieve this in its infancy. Further supporting this work through LD 1060 will allow the team behind it to continue to expand and grow the resource to gain a further reach.

Why is this important? When I think about this resource, I see it has an ability to operate as a preventative measure - to reduce stigma, and empower parents and caregivers to access information, resources, and supports proactively. That provides a critical opportunity to help prevent a difficult situation from becoming a crisis. That proactive support benefits children, families, and the communities they work and live in across our state.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ryan Quinn', with a stylized, cursive-like script.

Ryan Quinn