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Connor J. Archer, MBA

Founder & Chairman/CEO

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Tuesday April 15th, 2025

Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

c/o Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Maine State Legislature

Augusta, Maine 04333

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1449 – An Act to Establish the Working Group on Modernizing State Grants, Contracts, and Procurement

Dear Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs,

My name is Connor Archer, and I am the founder & Chairman/CEO of *The Courageous Steps Project*, a nonprofit organization based in Maine committed to supporting individuals and families navigating developmental challenges, especially those affected by Autism and other diverse needs. On behalf of our staff, volunteers, and the many communities we serve, I write to express our strong support for **LD 1449**, which establishes a Working Group on Modernizing State Grants, Contracts, and Procurement.

As a small but growing nonprofit that has sought and secured various forms of public funding, including through municipalities and state agencies, we have directly experienced the challenges LD 1449 aims to address. These include delays in grant execution, lengthy payment timelines, unclear communications, and inconsistencies across agencies regarding application processes and reimbursement expectations. These obstacles strain our limited resources and, more critically, delay or jeopardize the timely delivery of vital services to vulnerable populations.

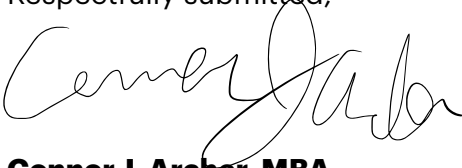
LD 1449 thoughtfully proposes a diverse working group, including voices from nonprofit organizations across Maine. It recognizes that to make meaningful improvements, we must center the experiences of those on the frontlines—those who navigate these systems daily to meet urgent community needs. The inclusion of considerations such as standardized indirect costs, uniform applications and systems centered around automation and efficiency, and a review of reimbursement rates demonstrates a deep understanding of the systemic improvements required.

By streamlining processes and fostering better communication between the state and its nonprofit partners, this bill would allow organizations like ours to focus more time and resources on our mission—and less on administrative hurdles. Ultimately, this translates to more responsive, efficient, and impactful services for Mainers across the state.

We commend the sponsors and supporters of LD 1449 for bringing forward this timely and necessary initiative. The Courageous Steps Project is proud to support this bill and stands ready to collaborate in efforts to modernize and improve the systems that connect public resources with community needs.

Thank you for your time, attention, and service to the people of Maine.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Connor J. Archer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Connor" being the most prominent part.

Connor J. Archer, MBA

Founder & Chairman/CEO

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