

Victoria Durrell  
Westbrook  
LD 1606

April 20, 2025

Representatives or Senators and Committee Chairs,

My name is Vicki Durrell and I reside in Westbrook. I am testifying in favor of the bill LD1606 Lifespan Waiver Accountability. I am testifying as an aging parent of a son with a developmental disability.

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) developed the Lifespan Waiver to support Mainers with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and/or autism to meet their changing needs through various stages of their lives.

I am strongly in favor of this bill being passed in order to secure my son's future. My son, Matthew, is 48 years old. He has lived in a group home run by Independence Association in Brunswick since he was 21. He has a wonderful life full of activities with friends, family and care givers. He has worked part-time at the Plant Home in Bath for 17 years where he is respected and treated like part of the team.

LD 1606, if passed, will require rulemaking for the Lifespan Waiver to be major substantive indefinitely so the Legislature will have some oversight into how it is implemented, and so that the process will be more transparent to stakeholders.

I want to know that now and into the future my son will have a dependable system of care. It needs to be strong for after I am gone. The care he has now, in section 21 is working.

The ideals of the Lifespan waiver are well intended- being more responsive to changing needs over the Lifespan, is a good thing. At the same time, DHHS also repeatedly insists families, like mine, currently receiving services that work well, need not worry: They say - section 21 and 29 are "grandfathered." They explain that the current waitlist, with thousands on it, will be taken care of because of the natural attrition of section 21 and 29. Can this truly all be done without harming people? Or is this too good to be true? It is more likely to work with good oversight! We want you to pass this bill to make sure the good intentions become successful outcomes. I want to know that my son, and others like him, will continue to have services that work for him.

For these reasons, I urge you to pass this bill to secure the future of our most vulnerable population.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Vicki Durrell  
Westbrook, Maine