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2024 - 2025

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Mission: To support adults and children with disabilities to achieve full and inclusive lives in their chosen communities.

DATE: April 23, 2025

RE: LD 1606 **An Act to Require Data Collection and Major Substantive Rulemaking for the Lifespan Waiver Providing Home and Community-based Services for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder or Other Related Conditions**

Dear Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services:

I am submitting testimony in support of LD 1606.

For nearly 28 consecutive years, I have had the privilege of supporting people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Autism here in the state of Maine. During my career, I've watched our service system evolve in response to changing needs and resources. The new Lifespan Waiver appears to be the next step in that evolution.

If fully implemented as envisioned, the Lifespan Waiver will be one of the most significant changes to service delivery in many years. The lives of thousands of Maine's most vulnerable citizens--and those who support them--will be substantially impacted by this new approach to services. I cannot stress enough the amplitude of this change.

To ensure that people with disabilities receive the best services possible, my opinion is that rulemaking for the Lifespan Waiver should be major substantive. Failure to meaningfully engage legislators, service recipients, providers, families, and other stakeholders in the process could have catastrophic consequences. We simply cannot afford to get this wrong.

I also want to express my support for the data collection component of LD 1606. Data collection and analysis are a critical part of bringing accountability to our service system. Maine citizens deserve to know whether or not the system being funded by their tax dollars is effective. Measuring that effectiveness requires robust and relevant data.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

Sincerely,

Brett Bulmer
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