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Wales
LD 1695

I am in full support of LD 1695 and request that you strongly support this measure. As an Executive Director of a nonprofit serving the downtown Lewiston and Portland communities, I have observed an increase in prostitution solicitation in recent years. These communities are also home many individuals who have suffered sexual assaults that occur from coercion and abuse at the hand of someone more powerful, older or authoritative. These events are more common than what is reported and authorities are not always trusted due to past experiences both here in Maine and abroad.

I have personally observed the disorganized and confusing process for finding supports for victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking. Given the resources available and already supported by our budget in the state of Maine, this ought not be.

The lack of process, point of contact, targeted support and case management, etc is a problem that can and should be solved.

Establishing a protocol that comes along side a victim in these traumatic moments is a necessary step to restoration and healing.