

POSITION STATEMENT IN SUPPORT**LD 1703, Resolve, to Establish the Adverse Childhood Experiences Screening and Resiliency Assessment Pilot Project****Presented to Maine's Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services**

As the state's largest grassroots mental health advocacy organization, NAMI Maine strongly supports the passage of *Resolve, to Establish the Adverse Childhood Experiences Screening and Resiliency Assessment Pilot Project*.

When the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Studies were initially released in 1998, it was found that childhood abuse, household dysfunction, and neglect were identified as significant risk factors in many chronic medical conditions and death in adulthood. The impact of childhood trauma has been significantly studied since the ACEs research was initially released and it has been found that providing trauma-informed, resiliency-based interventions and supports, the lasting impacts of these experiences is decreased. Under the guidance of their states surgeon general, California's legislature has initiated policy allowing for a pilot program and 2019, resulting in trainings and guidance surrounding the implementation of ACEs screening within medical offices, including the ability for providers to bill for the time it takes to thoughtfully discuss such impactful subjects.¹ As Adverse Childhood Experiences continue to move forward in recognition, awareness, and addressing the resulting factors, lives are being changed and saved at dramatic rates. Nine of the ten leading causes of death are directly linked to high ACEs scores. The state of California has estimated that the resulting conditions from unaddressed ACEs scores costs the state \$1.5 trillion annually, with \$24.6 billion linked to direct medical costs alone.²

California is leading the way in the development of many policies and guidelines that will allow for guidance in the implementation of processes and procedures for things such as mandated reporting and utilization of information. Our local law enforcement is also leading us in the utilization of proactively identifying resiliency factors and increasing them. As the state grapples with managing economic and fiscal concerns, addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences provides a long term, cost saving measures, as well as providing supports and resources to promote a healthy state. We urge this committee to vote ought to pass in order to ensure that we are identifying and addressing lasting physical and behavioral health impacts.

ABOUT NAMI MAINE: *Incorporated in 1984, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Maine Chapter (NAMI Maine) is the state's largest grassroots mental health organization. With support from national and regional affiliates, the agency is dedicated to building better lives for everyone impacted by behavioral health concerns. NAMI Maine engages with leaders and community partners at all levels to improve the state's mental health system through collaboration and education.*

¹ [Case Study: California's ACEs Aware Initiative - National Governors Association](#)

² [California's ACEs Aware Initiative Has Made Substantial Early Progress, but Sustained Investment Is Needed | RAND](#)

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POSITIONS & POLICY AGENDA

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