

April 23, 2025

To: Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services Maine State Legislature State House, Augusta, ME

Re: Testimony in Support of ME-LD1425 — An Act to Improve Access to Sustainable and Low Barrier Trauma Recovery Services.

Dear Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Meagan, and I am a contracted mental health clinician who has had the honor of working alongside the Maine Resiliency Center in Lewiston since February 2024. I write today in strong support of LD 1425, "An Act to Improve Access to Sustainable and Low Barrier Trauma Recovery Services."

As a mental health provider on the ground, I have witnessed firsthand the critical and life-changing role this center plays for individuals and families grappling with the immediate and cumulative effects of trauma—especially following the tragic mass shooting in Lewiston in October 2023. In the aftermath of that event, the Maine Resiliency Center quickly became a beacon of support, healing, and hope for a community in crisis.

There is a significant gap in Maine, particularly in Lewiston, when it comes to accessing timely and appropriate trauma-informed care. Too often, individuals are left without a safe space to process traumatic events, leading to long-term psychological consequences that impact not only individuals but entire communities. The Maine Resiliency Center helps bridge that gap. It has provided a consistent, welcoming, and professionally supported environment where trauma survivors, especially children, can begin to heal.

I have worked directly with children who were present during the Lewiston shooting. Through the services provided by the Center, I have seen remarkable growth in their emotional resilience. They are learning to regulate their emotions, understand their experiences, and develop healthy coping mechanisms. Most importantly, they are connecting with each other's unique experiences to the tragic event, ensuring them that they are not alone in this experience. These outcomes are not only clinically significant—they are lifesaving.

The proposed funding outlined in LD 1425—\$1,093,795 in FY 2025-26 and \$2,270,199 in FY 2026-27—is not just a budget line. It represents the State's commitment to healing, to community resilience, and to preventing future mental health crises. This funding will allow the Center to

continue and expand its essential services, giving more Mainers access to the support they need and deserve.

On behalf of myself, the families I serve, and the broader Lewiston community, I urge you to vote in favor of LD 1425. The Maine Resiliency Center is more than a program—it is a cornerstone of recovery and hope for a community still finding its way forward. Let us not miss this opportunity to sustain and strengthen that healing.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your attention to this vital issue.

With respect and gratitude,

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