

May 7, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Jennifer K. Zanca and I live in Auburn, Maine. I am writing to testify in support of LD 1425, An Act to Improve Access to Sustainable and Low-barrier Trauma Recovery Services.

I am a survivor of gun violence stemming from the Lewiston Mass shooting October 25, 2023. I was shot in my left arm, which shattered the bone and pulverized the muscle. The Resiliency center has been a place of refuge, connection and healing. I have attended support groups, yoga therapy and recently connecting with other survivors who were also shot.

The victims' advocates have assisted me on multiple occasions whether it is navigating other threats of violence that have haunted me or assisting with direction around the financial burden that ensued when my hospital bills were daunting.

I have also witnessed the unforeseen ongoing needs of several of the survivors that showed up a year and a half later. Trauma is not a Linear experience. The timelines vary and sometimes lasts a lifetime. whether it is the financial burden of being out of work, the ongoing physical limitations and more surgeries compromising day to day life. Or the need for childcare after losing a spouse. It doesn't just end. The ability to connect with others who are mentors and have the compassion and experience to facilitate this process have been crucial. It makes a difference, and I feel blessed to have the support system that has been available.

For these reasons I urge you to vote for LD 1425. Thank you

Sincerely,

Jennifer K. Zanca