



# Independence Association

Celebrating Ability Since 1966

2024 -

2025

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## DRAFT FOR COMMITTEE REVIEW

January 13, 2026

### Testimony of Amy Eisenbach

## LD 1932: An Act to Support Essential Support Workers and Enhance Workforce Development

### Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

January 20, 2026

Good afternoon, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of LD 1932: *An Act to Support Essential Support Workers and Enhance Workforce Development*.

My name is Amy Eisenbach. I am an Adult Community Case Manager of Independence Association, Independence Association is a community of individuals with disabilities, parents, families, friends, and local businesspeople working together with dedicated staff to provide services and support to adults and children with disabilities. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit.

We are dedicated to supporting adults and children with disabilities to achieve full and inclusive lives in their chosen communities.

We offer the following support to enhance the independence and inclusion of the people we serve.

### • HOME SUPPORTS:

➤ Through Residential Group Homes, we provide clients with safe homes with 24/7 staff who assist them. We support many individuals who are “aging in place” by providing increasing amounts of hospice care, allowing our clients to remain with their group home family.



Community Partner

3 Industrial Parkway, Suite 1 - Brunswick, Maine 04011

Ph. 207 725 4371 - Fax 207 725 1416

[www.independenceassociation.org](http://www.independenceassociation.org)





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- Our Community (Independent) Living option allows individuals to live in their own homes or apartments. While staff provide in-home and community support as needed to enhance daily living skills, health, and safety.
- Our Shared Living program is designed to connect adults with disabilities to caring for family and community members, who open their homes and lives to our clients. This allows an individual to live in a family-style environment and become a member of the household, the family, and the community.

- **CASE MANAGEMENT:**

- Adult Case Management: IA's comprehensive case management service for adults start with Person Center Plans based on individual strengths, needs, and desires. Our case managers work together with clients, their families, and a wide range of community resources that can maximize success. IA will coordinate necessary client services, advocate, refer, and monitor services through home, program, and community visits.
- Children's Case Management: Our certified case managers work with families in their homes for comfortable, convenient, and sensitive service coordination. IA offers caring and compassionate support to young people, from birth to age 20, through family focused treatment planning based on strengths, needs, and preferences of our clients. Case managers also work with youth in the transition from children's services to adult services.

- **Community Inclusion:**

- Through Community Vision, we support people with disabilities who live inclusively in their chosen community. Our day support programs and activities are tailored to the goals and abilities of the individuals served and may take place at our recreational facility or in the community. Activities could include volunteering with the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust or Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program, attending a weekly bowling league, participating in Special Olympics, enjoying community outings with friends, healthy living activities, and much more. Community Supports also offers programs focused on employment-related skills based on the interests and abilities of our clients.

LD 1932 would greatly impact my ability to provide the care and resources needed to my clients if the wage for DSP's is not above the 125% promised for 2025. All services provided across the DSP boards have been impacted each year with staff shortage due to the lack of competitive wages. The promised COLA increase was an incentive to bring people back to this field to offer settings to increase the services we provide for Work supports (given our "work first" state status), Home supports to ensure they can age in place and receive the supports they require to live as independently as possible. Community supports to provide Persons with ID the same opportunities the rest of us have; to make new friends and be social, which has been proven to increase quality and longevity of life. This is why we need a



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competitive wage to attract workers to this workforce to stabilize and grow the staffing to support individuals with disabilities in our community.

Now I come to you as a guardian for my adult sister who is only 6 years younger than me, I have been her guardian my entire adult life, I face fears daily that there will not be staff available to care for her and that her needs will go unmet in her group home or her community supports program. She has Down Syndrome, Mild ID and is deaf, her primary language is ASL. It is rare to find staff willing to learn her language at such a low wage job or to remain employed working with her given her high needs with requirements to care 100% for all her ADL's including toileting.

I ask that you PLEASE support LD 1932.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Amy Eisenbach  
aeisenbach@iaofmaine.org