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LD 2105

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services:

My name is Colleen Brown. I am a Maine resident and I work professionally with children and families in our public service systems. I am submitting testimony in support of LD 2105, with the recommendation that it ought to pass with amendments to strengthen clarity, accountability, and implementation.

I support the intent of this bill because mandated reporting is one of the most critical safeguards we have for protecting children. In real life, the greatest barrier is not usually willingness. It is confusion, hesitation, fear of being wrong, fear of retaliation, and inconsistent understanding of what “reasonable suspicion” actually looks like day to day.

There are several parts of LD 2105 that I strongly support. First, requiring mandated reporter training at least every two years is a practical and necessary update. Maine has high staff turnover in education, childcare, and human services, especially in rural counties. People forget what they learned. New staff often enter roles without enough guidance. Regular training saves time, reduces hesitation, and ultimately protects children.

Second, I support the language that prohibits employers from discouraging reporting. In small communities, the social pressure not to “make waves” can be real. Mandated reporters need to know the State of Maine stands behind them when they act in good faith.

Third, I support the requirement that a person with firsthand knowledge make the report. Too often, concerns get passed up a chain and lost in translation or delayed. Clear responsibility reduces delay.

However, I urge the Committee to amend LD 2105 in one major area: the bill removes the penalty for violations of the mandated reporter law. If Maine is expanding mandated reporter obligations, tightening timelines, and increasing training expectations, the accountability side of the law should not be weakened at the same time. Removing penalties sends the wrong message and risks undermining the urgency and seriousness that mandated reporting requires.

Finally, if this bill is going to significantly expand who qualifies as a mandated reporter, Maine must ensure that training is accessible, practical, and consistently delivered statewide. A law is only as strong as its implementation. Rural counties need the same clarity and support as urban areas.

LD 2105 moves Maine in the right direction. With amendments that maintain accountability and support implementation, it will better protect children and strengthen trust in our systems.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Colleen Brown
Washington County, Maine