

Testimony of: Anna McLean, DO

To: HHS Committee Re: *An Act to Sustain Access to Children's Residential Care Service*
(LD 2125)

January 27, 2026

Dear distinguished members of the HHS Committee,

As a child psychiatrist in training, I witness the impacts of limited residential care services in our state on a regular basis. The lack of clinically appropriate residential care services negatively impacts our communities, leaving families with no choice but to pursue out of state placement, and importantly contributing to lengthy psychiatric admissions while children wait for residential treatment. Emergency departments and psychiatric hospitals are NOT intended for long stay patients and pose a threat to basic human rights given limited access to fresh air and/or daylight. When a behaviorally dysregulated child is waiting for residential treatment, they often wait in the hospital setting which makes it increasingly challenging to secure residential treatment given the behavioral acuity that can result from prolonged stays in highly restrictive environments. Additionally, hospital treatment settings are not ideal for family-based treatment which can exacerbate attachment difficulties as the child is separated from their family system. Residential programs should be reimbursed based on clinical and behavioral acuity, which may facilitate keeping Mainers in Maine.

Thank you,

Anna McLean, DO

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