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1/27/2026

Senator Ingwersen, Chair
Representative Meyer, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 2105 – *An Act to Update Maine's Mandated Reporting Laws*

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information in support of LD 2105, *An Act to Update Maine's Mandated Reporting Laws*.

This bill proposes the repeal of current mandated reporting statute, 22 MRSA §4011-A and replaces it with a new section, 22 MRSA §4011-D. The specific changes include eliminating the list of 32 specific professional categories that “shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the department when the person knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or is likely to be abuse or neglected or that a suspicious child death has occurred.” §4011-D would replace that list with a broad requirement that “persons, who in the normal course of their professional duties interact with children or persons responsible for children, shall report to the department at the first reasonable opportunity but no later than 48 hours, if the person suspects or has reason to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, or has knowledge of, or observes a child being subject to conditions that could likely result in abuse or neglect or knows or has reason to believe that a suspicious child death has occurred.” The bill also requires that mandated reporters make the report directly, clarifies the process for reporting to the District Attorney in instances where the information in a report may constitute a crime, and updates the training requirement for mandated reporters from 4 years to every 2 years.

OCFS supports the changes proposed in LD 2105 because they reflect an evolution of national best practice to ensure that families who need assistance in mitigating circumstances of abuse or neglect receive support earlier. This reduces adverse childhood experiences and improves OCFS’ ability to meet its statutory obligations. The goal is not to create more eyes on a family or increase the number of reports, but instead to simplify the statute and ensure that protective intervention can occur as soon as possible. Simplifying the statute also has the benefit of eliminating role confusion and arbitrary limitations around who is a mandated reporter. For instance, the list that currently exists in §4011-A includes categories like teachers and youth camp staff but it isn’t clear how a youth sports coach or afterschool program employee fits into this framework. This lack of clarity creates loopholes that, while likely not intended, are creating very real confusion for Mainers as

well as gaps that children and families in need of support can fall through.

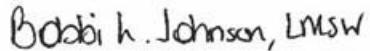
The approach in this bill is based around the shared responsibility model for child safety that has continued to evolve in Maine with the implementation of Maine's Child Safety and Family Well-being Plan. This work promotes the concept that everyone plays a role in keeping children safe and ensuring that the stability and safety of Maine's families is a community value that is not limited to an enumerated list of professions. OCFS believes that the changes proposed in LD 2105 will continue to facilitate this understanding in Maine and strengthen Maine's efforts related to building community pathways of support for children and families.

OCFS and the Maine Child Welfare Action Network (MCWAN) have been working together for several years around strengthening and improving reporting of known or suspected child abuse and neglect. These efforts have included convening a workgroup inclusive of mandated reporters from across a variety of professional fields to better understand their experiences and gather feedback to inform strategic improvements. A survey of mandated reporters which received over 900 responses was also completed. Currently work is underway to revise and update mandated reporter training curriculum based on stakeholder (including mandated reporters, providers, and parents with lived experience) feedback.

OCFS urges you to support LD 2105.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions during your deliberation of this bill.

Sincerely,



Bobbi L. Johnson, LMSW
Director
Office of Child and Family Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services