



LD 2106: Testimony of Betsy Sweet on behalf of The Behavioral Health Collaborative in support, including a request for clarification language.

Chair Carney, Chair Kuhn and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Betsy Sweet, and I am here on behalf of the Behavioral Health Community Collaborative in support of LD 2106. The BHCC is a collaborative of 6 community based behavioral health organizations who, collectively, serve 70% of the people of Maine who receive behavioral health services.

We are very grateful for this legislation and the clarity it provides. As behavioral health providers the scope and gravity of the actions that are happening in this state are many fold.

We must be able to adhere to HIPPA regulations so having a judicial warrant is a bare minimum.

We all employ staff who are frightened to come to work and rely on us to keep them safe.

We all serve people who are part of the communities being targeted. They are individually and collectively experiencing extreme trauma are their families, friends, and neighbors.

The impact of this trauma will be extensive and long lasting.

Assuring people that they are safe with us and that we will protect them is crucial to safety and morale.

And, we have a technical concern that we would like the committee to address in the work session and final language of any bill:

Please clarify that “health institutions” includes all behavioral health settings (not just those licensed under Title 22).

Please add to the list of covered personnel, all behavioral health professionals/employees (not just social workers).

Thank you in advance for addressing these concerns. And with these concerns addressed, we strongly urge this bill receive unanimous ought to pass support. It’s the most patriotic thing you can do.

The members of the Behavioral Health Community Collaborative are Sweetser, Inc., Opportunity Alliance, Shalom House, KidsPeace, Spurwink, Community Concepts