



In Re:

LD 2212, Section Z363: *An Act Making Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2027*

February 17, 2026

Joint Standing Committees on Appropriation and Financial Affairs & Health and Human Services

Good afternoon, Senator Rotondo, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Gattine, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Health and Human Services Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD2212, Section Z363, which adds critical funding to the Maine Developmental Services Oversight & Advisory Board.

I'm Jennifer Putnam, CEO of Waypoint Maine. I serve on the Maine Developmental Services Oversight and Advisory Board (OAB) and represent the provider community on the Board. I have served in this role for over twelve years and in that time, I have seen the OAB's ability to provide meaningful oversight to state departments slowly erode as the funds allocated for staffing for the Board have remained the same for the past sixteen years.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there is a 34% reduction in purchasing power between 2010 and today. This has meant, for the OAB, a compounding challenge of more services to provide oversight for, but fewer dollars to work with. Without adequate funds to pay a salary and benefits to an Executive Director, our commitment to oversight and ensuring access to services rings hollow.

The OAB is a statutorily mandated Board that was put in place as part of the consent decree, following the de-institutionalization of Pineland. Access to participation in one's own community was and is a central tenet of services for people with intellectual disabilities and autism in Maine. The OAB plays a critical role in ensuring that our promise to people with intellectual disabilities is kept.

I'm here today to ask you to allocate and fund this necessary increase for the Oversight and Advisory Board to continue its important work. I'm grateful to Governor Mills for putting this into the supplemental budget. Please vote ought to pass.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Putnam, Oversight & Advisory Board Member