



Kristin Overton  
Chesterville

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Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyers, and honorable members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

My name is Kristin Overton and I am the Executive Director of SKILLS, Inc., a role I assumed in July.

SKILLS is a non-profit organization in central Maine, serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities for more than 60 years. SKILLS provides more than 110 people with 24/7 residential support and day programming under Sections 21, 29, and 97-F. I am here today to testify neither for nor against *LD 659: An Act to Promote Seamless and Flexible Home and Community Supports Across the Lifespan for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities or Autism* and to request that this legislation be considered for major substantive rulemaking.

I am happy to share the Department's vision for expanding services and providing better transitions between youth and adult services. I also applaud the Department for seeking ways to bring more flexibility into the services provided, however I am also uncertain. As a provider, there aren't enough details in the legislation to fully understand the impact this will have on the people we support, on their families, and on providers. The Lifespan waiver is seeking to change many things; the services that have been suggested, but not yet determined, are primarily new services without definition at this time. The cross-walk of services between Sections 13, 21, and 29, and the new Waiver has not been completed.

The transition between child and adult services is difficult because change and transitions are hard. January 2025 is very close and new services take time to be fully understood by the people we support and providers. The Community Membership service, initiated during COVID, is one of the most needed



and exciting services that hint at what's to come. However, 2 years later case managers and people receiving the service are still considering it as no different than 1 on 1 community support rather than as an opportunity to build meaningful relationships that could and should eventually supplant the DSP's role from the forefront to the background.

The Lifespan Waiver presents many opportunities, but also raises many questions regarding timing, service level eligibility, the provision of service delivery, maintaining coordination and communication between providers, establishing the licensing of providers, rate determinations, and how people with fewer needs and those with much greater needs will each receive the right support, at the right time, and in the right setting.

With such a complex delivery mechanism, soon to be the only mechanism for the people we support, I ask that the necessary details and specifics of the waiver be included in statute to give guidance for the rule-making process.

I believe that the State has a very difficult job of developing this waiver, but one that is so very valuable and necessary. I ask that the policy committee be provided the oversight and accountability required for a change of this magnitude. SKILLS thanks the committee and the department for considering ways that we can do better by the people we support, and we want to be a part of this exciting change.