



**Testimony of Matt Hickey, MACSP Brain Injury Committee Chair
Chief Executive Officer, Creative Works**

In Support of LD 539

An Act to Provide Substance Use Disorder Counseling for MaineCare Members with an Acquired Brain Injury

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

March 27, 2023

Good morning, Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to come before you in support of LD 539.

My name is Matt Hickey. I am the Chief Executive Officer at Creative Works, a non-profit founded in 1967 that supports more than 500 adults with disabilities here in Maine. Creative Works has provided residential services to individuals with acquired brain injury for more than 30 years. Today, Creative Works supports 30 individuals who have suffered a brain injury in our group home settings.

I also serve on the Board of Directors and Chair the Brain Injury Services Committee of the Maine Association for Community Service Providers (MACSP). MACSP is the statewide association of 85 individual, mission driven agencies providing person centered and individualized educational, vocational, residential and community supports, as well as specialized services and care to several thousand of Maine's children and adults who have either intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, or brain injuries, so that they may live full and meaningful lives in the community.

On behalf of our MACSP members, I want to thank Representative Hepler for introducing the bill.

Substance use disorder (SUD) significantly impacts individuals with brain injury. Data provided by the Brain Injury Association of America Maine Chapter shows that 45% to 60% of individuals with brain injury who are receiving inpatient treatment have a prior history of SUD, and 20% develop SUD following a brain injury.

Maine is fortunate to have neurorehabilitation clinics (Section 102) that use a transdisciplinary approach in supporting individuals with brain injury. Those attending Section 102 clinics receive therapies from licensed professionals who also specialize in treating brain injury. The Section 102 clinics have a comprehensive and holistic approach, however SUD therapy is not included in the menu of services. I have worked supporting individuals with brain injury long enough to remember when SUD therapy was offered in the Section 102 clinics, and recall individuals benefiting from those services.

Brain injury survivors often struggle coordinating services, and it can be overwhelming for them to navigate the service system. Adding SUD therapy to the Section 102 clinics would make SUD services

more accessible for those with brain injury who also have co-occurring SUD. In addition, the SUD therapy would be provided by professionals with an expertise in brain injury rehabilitation.

Thank you for your time and consideration, we urge your support for LD 539. Please contact me with any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

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