



Children's Advocacy Center  
of Androscoggin, Franklin,  
& Oxford Counties

March 27, 2023

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and Members of Health and Human Services Committee:

My name is Jamie Lynn Miller I am a resident of Woodstock, Maine. I am employed by Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services as a Forensic Interviewer for the Children's Advocacy Center of Androscoggin, Franklin, & Oxford Counties.

I am submitting testimony in support of LD 566, An Act to Provide Funding for Sexual Assault Services.

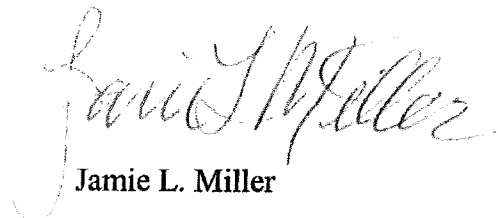
As a forensic interviewer I have completed a nationally recognized forensic interviewer training. As a forensic interviewer I was trained to specialize in interviewing children, that have been impacted by child abuse, in a child friendly, trauma informed, and forensically sound manner. I am a member of our multidisciplinary team responding to child abuse in our communities. My role is to gather information from the child, through conversation in a non-leading and non-suggestive way, that will allow child protective services and/or law enforcement to conduct an investigation while reducing re-traumatization to the child. I attend extensive ongoing trainings as this field is constantly evolving. Sexual Assault Center staff and advocates are at the leading edge of trauma informed response. As the world around us changes and requires us to be even more trauma informed we are setting the example for others. This work is demanding and requires dedication. It can be heartbreaking at times but we keep showing up for those we serve.

Higher wages for Sexual Assault Center Staff would help Centers retain quality staff and recruit qualified candidates for open positions. It would remind the current staff that although the work is hard, it matters and makes a difference and that we are appreciated. After all, we are paving the way to the future of sexual violence prevention and response efforts.

I have a family of my own that I work to support. I am fortunate to work with a collaborative team of professionals and in a field of work that I am passionate about. The mission and hope for the future keeps me showing up every day. I have had to pick up a second job on the weekends to supplement my income to make ends meet financially and still do the work I do as a forensic interviewer Monday through Friday. I make more money on a Saturday working as a cashier in a cafe than I do on a weekday in my role as a forensic interviewer interviewing children who have endured unimaginable abuse. I ask them to recall events that they would likely rather forget

about and to provide detail about those events and ask them to talk about how it made them feel. I listen. My role is to remain neutral, not validate, and still reduce any re-traumatization that could occur through the investigative process. We do this work and do it well, though not without immense dedication, ongoing training, and support. Higher pay would be a way to show us that support and help us to continue doing the hard work we are all so passionate about.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please vote in favor of LD 566, An Act to Provide Funding for Sexual Assault Services.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jamie L. Miller". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

**Jamie L. Miller**

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