

# Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services

*Serving Oxford, Franklin and Androscoggin Counties*

www.sapars.org

March 27, 2023

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

My name is Jaime Ricker and I am submitting testimony on behalf of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services.

I am submitting testimony in support of LD 1092, An Act to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the State.

I am the Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Victim Advocate for the agency. I provide support to survivors of sex trafficking and exploitation by walking alongside them in their journey. I provide crisis intervention and ongoing support services, which could include accompaniments to support survivors during forensic medical procedures, law enforcement interviews, and/or court proceedings (civil and criminal). I also assist survivors with developing and implementing comprehensive safety plans and provide follow-up, referrals, and warm hand offs to other social service agencies as appropriate.

So often I have met with youth who are being trafficked and/or exploited. They themselves may not recognize it because so often the traffickers have used such grooming tactics that even the adults don't recognize it. We need to have more intentional conversations and education to see those red flags and ask the question to meet the needs in a trauma informed, victim centered approach before they are adults. So many of the adults I have met with have shared with me that they remember having to exchange some kind sexual act for something of value, whether it be money, drugs, food, new clothes, a place to stay. Yet to them it didn't seem to be a big deal back then. As an adult many years later, they can see how much it has impacted their life.

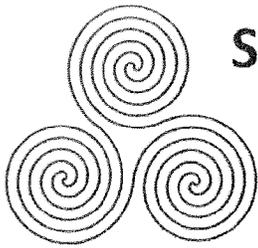
There's a short clip that we use when providing trainings to community partners, The Making of a Girl, produced by Jillian Buckley and Rachel Lloyd, who is the founder of Girls Educational and Mentoring Services out of New York which talks about the impacts of sex trafficking, child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

**ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY**  
182 Webster St | Lewiston, ME 04240  
207-784-5272

**FRANKLIN COUNTY**  
144 High St. | Farmington, ME 04938  
207-778-9522

**OXFORD COUNTY**  
66 Paris St. | Norway, ME 04268  
207-743-9777

**24 HOUR RESPONSE SERVICES**  
1-800-871-7741  
1-888-458-5599 (TTY)



# Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services

*Serving Oxford, Franklin and Androscoggin Counties*

[www.sapars.org](http://www.sapars.org)

One of the statements in the clip talks about being a young girl and being asked to take off their clothes for someone to watch. The survivor in the clip explains that this was “something she never thought she’d do and yet a part of her already knew how to do it because she had been doing it for her step father all those years before.” We hear this connection between child sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation many times in our work. This makes Children’s Advocacy Centers to ideal place to host some of these positions.

This bill will create key positions to support children experiencing commercial sexual exploitation. Right now, the state of Maine is missing these key positions that will help to bring the supports together and address the unique needs of the youth who are being trafficked and exploited.

I thank you for your time and hope that you will support this bill.

#### ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY

182 Webster St | Lewiston, ME 04240  
207-784-5272

#### FRANKLIN COUNTY

144 High St. | Farmington, ME 04938  
207-778-9522

#### OXFORD COUNTY

66 Paris St. | Norway, ME 04268  
207-743-9777

#### 24 HOUR RESPONSE SERVICES

1-800-871-7741  
1-888-458-5599 (TTY)