



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Rep. Rebecca Jauch presenting
**LD 1114, An Act to Eliminate the Annual Medical Eligibility Determinations
of Need for Families of Children with Disabilities**
before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Good afternoon, Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Rebecca Jauch and I represent House District 51 which is the majority of Topsham. I am pleased to be here today to present **LD 1114, An Act to Eliminate the Annual Medical Eligibility Determinations of Need for Families of Children with Disabilities.**

I submitted this bill after a conversation with my good friend Abby. She has a wonderful son who in addition to being a curious, silly and happy little boy, also happens to have an extra chromosome. Every year since his birth, Abby has to fill out a sizeable stack of paper proving her son has Down syndrome so that he can continue to qualify for and receive the medical services he needs. This process is not only burdensome on a family's time as they run around getting papers signed by a list of medical professionals, it is also stressful as they worry about missing a form, misfiling a document or accidentally overlooking a section – all of which can cause them to be dropped from the system at which point the process starts over and can take weeks or months to correct. The conditions these children have are permanent – they will always have their disability, Abby's son will always have that extra chromosome and they will always need services. So why do we make them go through this exercise every year which not only wastes their time and creates additional stress in their lives, but is also a poor use of our state's resources?

My friend and her family are one among thousands in our state that must go through this process every year. LD 1114 looks to remove this stress from these families by eliminating the requirement to continually prove eligibility after it has been initially established. Instead of starting from scratch every year, families should just update their information to reflect changes in medical needs and personal information. I am asking you today to please support Maine families of children with disabilities, to remove this burden from their lives and to remove this burden on our limited state resources. I ask you to please support LD 1114, I thank you for your consideration and I am happy to answer any questions.