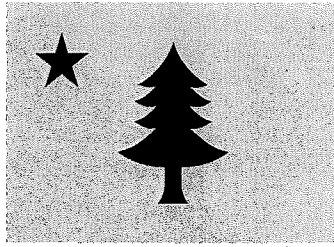


Maeghan Maloney
District Attorney

Francis Griffin
Deputy District Attorney



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(P) 207-623-1156 or 207-623-1157
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STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
PROSECUTORIAL DISTRICT IV

February 26, 2024

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and Honorable members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, my name is Maeghan Maloney, I am the District Attorney for Kennebec and Somerset Counties. I am here today to testify in support of LD 2214—specifically the county jail operations fund for Medicated Assisted Treatment in the county jails.

Kennebec County jail and Somerset County jail have life-saving Medication Assisted Treatment (“MAT”) programs. When someone with substance use disorder “SUD” is released from incarceration, that person is at the highest likelihood of a relapse causing death. The MAT programs in the jails are saving lives. This funding is essential to continue these programs.

Not only have the jail MAT programs provided known treatments for SUD, they are also on the cutting edge of finding new treatments. In Somerset County Jail, Dr. Alane O’Connor leads a transformative MAT program with injectable treatment into the belly once a month. While a person needs a new shot every month, if a monthly dose is missed, the person continues to receive the benefit of the medication for up to 8 months. The medicine protects the person from cravings and from overdose if a substance is used. Since the inception of this program, not a single person has died within the first month of leaving Somerset County Jail.

This funding is also important for property tax relief. Property taxes are the most regressive taxes Mainers face. Currently, property taxes pay for MAT in the county jails. Governor Mills’ welcome supplemental funding will provided needed assistance.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maeghan Maloney', written in a cursive style.

Maeghan Maloney
District Attorney

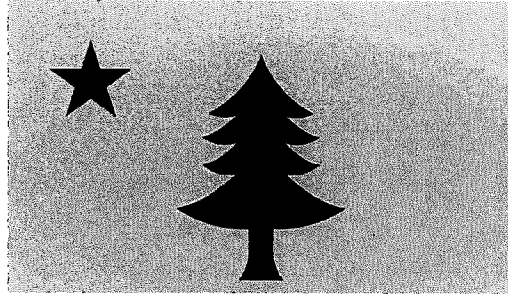
KATHERYN SLATTERY
DISTRICT I

JONATHAN SAHRBECK
DISTRICT II

ANDREW ROBINSON
DISTRICT III

MAEGHAN MALONEY
DISTRICT IV

STATE OF MAINE



MARIANNE LYNCH
DISTRICT V

NATASHA IRVING
DISTRICT VI

MATTHEW J. FOSTER
DISTRICT VII

TODD R. COLLINS
DISTRICT VIII

MAINE PROSECUTORS ASSOCIATION

AARON FREY
ATTORNEY GENERAL

February 26, 2024

Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, and Honorable members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, my name is Maeghan Maloney, I am the District Attorney for Kennebec and Somerset Counties and the President of the Maine Prosecutors Association. I am here today to testify in support of LD 566—an Act to Provide Funding for Sexual Assault Services.

Children's Advocacy Centers are an essential tool for prosecuting child sexual assault in Maine. In the past, when my parents were child protective case workers for the state of Maine, we did not have good tools for responding to child sexual assault. When a child disclosed sexual assault, the child was interviewed multiple times by child protective case workers like my parents, law enforcement, district attorneys, and school officials. There were inconsistencies as to whether the interviews were recorded. Now, when a child discloses child sexual assault, we have much better tools in place.

When a child discloses sexual assault or other physical abuse, law enforcement or a DHHS caseworker can refer the child to a Children's Advocacy Center. In Maine, we have statewide coverage of these centers, and they provide two important tools—a forensic interview and family advocacy. A forensic interview is where a child is interviewed by a highly trained, neutral interviewer in a child friendly space. This interview is recorded and can be used for both the law enforcement and DHHS investigation, so the child does not need to be interviewed multiple times. Family advocacy connects non-offending caregivers to services such as civil legal aid and counseling.

Now, CAC interviews are more important than ever based on a new law that allows the interviews to be admissible evidence in civil and criminal cases. I

recently used the new law in a case that would not have been able to be prosecuted without the forensic interview due to the child's fear of testifying. After the video was played, the child answered the defense attorney's questions, and later the jury returned a guilty verdict.

CACs need highly trained forensic interviewers and family advocates because these cases are incredibly challenging. When advocates are not paid a living wage, we are not able to maintain forensic interviewers in this role, it impacts our ability to prosecute child sexual assault cases. For this reason, I am asking you to support LD 566 and consider including it in the supplemental budget.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maeghan Maloney', written in a cursive style.

Maeghan Maloney
District Attorney