



61 Winthrop Street • Augusta, ME 04330  
1-800-499-0229 • Fax 207-621-0509  
MLTCOP@MaineOmbudsman.org

## TESTIMONY

### **LD 51: An Act to Increase Oversight of Fatalities of and Serious Injuries to Adults Subject to Public Guardianship**

**Nicole Marchesi**  
**Maine Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

February 4, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is Nicole Marchesi. I am the Public Policy Advocate for the Maine Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

As you know, the Ombudsman Program serves older and disabled adults who are residents of nursing homes, residential care, assisted living and recipients of adult day services and home care services.

We are pleased to present testimony in support of this legislation that proposes the expansion of the charge of the Aging and Disability Mortality Review Panel to review all deaths of and serious injuries to adults subject to public guardianship, whether or not they are enrolled in home and community -based services programs. It also expands the membership of the panel.

Ombudsman Program staff serves on the panel. It has been particularly helpful that the Aging and Disability Mortality Review Panel Coordinator, Anne Lovegren MSN, RN, FNP-BC has an extensive medical background and has completed a nationally certified training program for conducting critical incident, including death, investigations. As such, she is well prepared for her important role. Additionally, Dr. Lauren Michalakes MD serves on the panel as representative of the DHHS, Office of Aging and Disability Services. Dr. Michalakes is an internist with more than twenty years' experience. Her background has added expertise that has been very helpful to the work of the panel. The broad range of stakeholders serving on the panel has enhanced its effectiveness.

Expansion of the panel to include a person responsible for adult protective services, a member with lived experience as an adult receiving services, and a primary health care provider will be beneficial to the panel.

As the panel considers deaths and serious injuries to individuals under public guardianship, the input of a representative from DHHS, Adult Protective Services concerning their policies and practices regarding visitation and oversight of adults under public guardianship will aid in conducting a comprehensive review. This will also be helpful in consideration of potential changes to improve oversight and the wellbeing of individuals under public guardianship.

Thank you for your consideration.