



Serving Kennebec & Somerset Counties in Maine

Testimony of Richard Langley, Violence Intervention Director, Family Violence Project

In Support of LD 666: "An Act to Prevent Domestic Violence by Providing Adequate Funding Support for Court-Ordered Certified Domestic Violence Intervention Programs."

March 3, 2025

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and honorable members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to write in support of this bill.

I direct ChangeWork, the Certified Domestic Violence Intervention Program serving Kennebec and Somerset counties, and my team works each week with approximately 160 men who have been referred to us as a result of incidents of violence or abuse impacting their partners and children.

The intervention work that we do is grounded in the belief that many men can choose to change the harmful and dangerous ways they interact with their partners and families, if our interventions are done thoughtfully and skillfully. Even men who have engaged in long patterns of coercive, controlling, and abusive behaviors can choose a better and safer path.

Over the course of each week, we conduct twelve intervention groups with approximately 15 men each. This work is focused on core goals: to help men understand the nature of violence and abuse in their relationships and to lead them to embrace healthy accountability for that behavior. The focus of the group work is on real engagement – substantive, truth-based interactions, with honesty and accountability the goal of every session.

For our purpose, partner violence has to be understood as more than physical violence alone. Emotional and psychological abuse, and controlling and coercive behaviors, can destroy relationships and families. All of these types of abuse undermine trust, inflict trauma, and create dynamics of ongoing harm that can be passed from generation to generation.

We often talk in groups about the legacies we wish to leave behind as men. It can be a powerful exercise in self-reflection. ChangeWork strives to help men explore their thinking and beliefs, to break cycles of abusive conduct, and to work toward creating lives and legacies they can be proud of as partners and fathers.

Achieving adequate funding for this program is crucial to its success. My team of facilitators work in a supportive and collaborative environment, but we are tested daily by the pressures of this work. We are mindful of our roles as collaborative partners in ensuring safety in Maine communities and look forward to any effort to strengthen and stabilize this important mission.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill. I'm happy to share any additional information I can.

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ChangeWork participant quotes:

I appreciate you welcoming me into your class & working with me through this process. It has been a good challenge to participate in for the past year of life+. You take your responsibilities & passion very seriously & that is evident.

I'm taking deep breaths & staying focused on family at this point. Thank you for your time & sincere open welcome door, Mr Langley.

Michael S.

It was a long road but a year later and I'm really appreciative of your time and what you do for everybody. I'm glad I had the opportunity I did to take that class instead of the alternative route. It's very useful and you guys make a big difference on people. I hope everything goes well for you guys. I'll never forget it!

Austin G.

Well, I definitely appreciate the amount of stuff I've taken away from the group sessions. I may not have felt I should've been in the class at first, but I'll tell ya I've learned more in understanding myself than I'd ever thought I ever would. From effects of my actions to what helped provoke them and defining the moments I lost complete control. It's been a learning experience all the way around.

Michael G.