



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Testimony of Rep. Marshall Archer in support of
LD 662, An Act to Fund Military Sexual Trauma Liaisons
Before the Veteran and Legal Affairs Committee

Good afternoon, Sen. Hickman, Rep. Supica and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. My name is Marshall Archer, and I represent House District 129, which is part of Saco.

I am here today to testify in strong support of **LD 662, An Act to Fund Military Sexual Trauma Liaisons**, because our duty to those who have served does not end when they take off the uniform. It is our responsibility to ensure that every service member and veteran has access to the care and support they need, especially those who have endured military sexual trauma (MST).

As a Marine who served two tours in Iraq and the current Commander of a local Veterans Services Organization, I have seen firsthand the challenges that many of our service members and veterans face. Among those challenges, none is more heartbreaking than the struggle of those who have survived military sexual trauma. MST leaves lasting scars, both seen and unseen, and too often, survivors are met with barriers instead of the support they deserve.

This bill provides critical funding for MST liaisons, professionals who are dedicated to assisting survivors in navigating medical care, benefits and legal services. These liaisons serve as trusted advocates, ensuring that those affected by MST receive trauma-informed care and the dignity of being heard, respected and supported.

As a former board member of the Betsy Ann Ross House of Hope, now the Sisters in Arms Center, I have had the privilege of working with women veterans who have faced enormous challenges after their service. I have seen the profound impact that safe housing and supportive services can have on their ability to rebuild their lives. But housing alone is not enough – survivors need specialized support tailored to the unique difficulties they face. That is exactly what this bill provides.

LD 662 is not just about funding; it is about doing what is right. It is about standing up for the men and

women who stood up for us. We cannot allow bureaucracy or inaction to deny them the resources they need to heal. By passing this bill, we send a clear message that Maine will lead in supporting our veterans and active-duty service members, especially those who have suffered in silence for too long.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting LD 662.