



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and Esteemed Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs, I am Mathew McIntyre and I humbly serve as the Representative for Maine's House District 18, spanning portions of Penobscot, Hancock and Washington counties. I offer to you today my testimony in full support of **LD662**, "An Act to Fund Military Sexual Trauma Liaisons".

As I begin, I attest my support for this Act is a direct result of engaging pointed conversations with the presenter Representative Rielly, as well as with key members of the Governor's Advisory Council on Military Sexual Trauma.

We as legislators are charged to dispassionately render our decisions based on what we believe is in the best interest of the larger constituent base, and as we are also human beings with families, friends and our own individual life experiences, occasionally the Bills we review and vote on indeed hit close to home. This for me is one of those instances. I am a brother, I am an uncle, and I am a former US Navy sailor. In each of these capacities I have witnessed first-hand the devastating impact of sexual trauma to innocent victims; a sister, a niece and a shipmate. I have absolutely no tolerance for the individuals that commit these vile crimes, and I will always endeavor to ensure that victims are provided with critical resources to assist with what is undeniably a lifelong recovery process.

While I have been informed there are in fact already some existing resources for our State's active duty, reserve and veteran uniformed military heroes who have suffered from sexual trauma, I believe the funding requested within this Bill can be categorized as both nominal and reasonable to improve the portfolio of support available to victims. Moreover, I have been provided assurances the program will remain under the careful watch of stakeholders to ensure that resources sought and authorized do not grow beyond defined need, and most importantly, that we will not accidentally create layers of bureaucracy that impede timely victim access to critical support resources.

This is an uncomfortable topic of discussion for many; however, it is one that must be engaged by honest brokers. While I individually pray that someday we will see less victims, I know we will never get to zero. We must be both compassionate and pragmatic in our advocacy for victims, and I assert this Bill represents that balance.

I thank you for your time today and humbly request your thoughtful evaluation of, and unanimous support for this important Act.