

March 17, 2025

Re: LD 840 An Act to Modernize the State Supplement to Supplemental Security Income by Removing Marriage Disincentives.

Dear Senator Ingerswen, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services:

I am here to testify in favor of LD 840.

My name is Stephanie Pelletier and I live in Fort Kent. I am a Self Advocate. A Self Advocate means you can advocate for yourself and for others who can't speak for themselves. I became involved with Speaking Up For Us, by my husband Kile who introduced me to it.

Before my husband and I got married, we called social security and they said roughly I would make \$200 a month. But when we got married we called social security again and that was not the case. They said I would be getting \$6.75 a month. Time went on and I would get SSI letters in the mail saying I would have to pay things back because they would pay me too much- and that was annoying.

I should not be penalized because I wanted to get married to my best friend. It's unfair to get penalized because when I first heard that I was getting \$6.75 a month, I felt like a burden on my husband and my family members. I would have to rely on them to pay for clothes, hygiene products, food, it's just not fair for them to always have to pay for me.

We deserve to be heard like anyone else and to have the same respect of everyone else. We should have the opportunity to get married and have a life.

I urge you to vote in favor of LD 840. Thank you for your time.