

Testimony of Mackenzie Morel
In Support of LD 875, An Act to Fund Essential Services for Victims of Domestic Violence
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
March 19, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Mackenzie Morel, I live in Piscataquis County, and I am testifying in support of LD 875, An Act to Fund Essential Services for Victims of Domestic Violence.

I have many roles in my life. I am a daughter. I am a sister. I am an advocate for my friend's children. I am homeowner. I am a first responder. I was a victim of domestic violence, and now I'm a survivor.

In the year of 2014, I found myself in an abusive home with an abusive partner, and I reached out for legal assistance from an advocate at Partners for Peace. This allowed me to have an ally to bring court with me when I fought to get a protection order.

In the year of 2019, I was involved in a serious relationship with the son of a law enforcement officer. I was strangled by force and ended up in the hospital after being detained by the town police. After that day in September of 2019, Partners for Peace was involved in my healing journey. The staff helped me through every court process to aid me and protect me from any further harm.

They have assisted me to become a stronger voice in my community and now I have become a first responder through the passion of fighting for women and the end to Domestic Violence.

Partners for Peace has been a crutch and backbone of safety for survivors and emergency services. The advocates who helped me worked with me for three years endlessly at the drop of a call to help relocate me, support me, listen to me, and to gain the justice I needed and deserved. Domestic violence survivors need these services to let them know that they are not alone and that there is help and healing. This funding will allow advocates to continue the programming that survivors need from offering support groups, providing legal assistance, answering the helpline, and helping survivors thrive, like I have.

I am not in person today; however, if circumstances were in my control, I would join the courageous individuals testifying on this bill. This testimony is to let the State of Maine know in my own words this funding is vitally necessary for the growth, healing, safety, and development of human beings. I would not be here today without their guidance, education, support, and diligent care.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to share my story and my testimony.