

Testimony of Pamela DuBois

In Support of LD 875, An Act to Fund Essential Services for Victims of Domestic Violence Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

March 19, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Pamela DuBois, I am from Aroostook County, and I am testifying about why support for this critical funding is so important.

The Hope and Justice Project in Aroostook County serves as an irreplaceable cog in an elaborate machine that serves and protects some of the most vulnerable members of our community. I have personally and professionally witnessed the astounding impact these services have on individuals and to children.

In May of 2014, my sister Amy Theriault was brutally murdered by her ex-boyfriend. During the time that followed, I was extremely grateful for the expertise and support offered by staff at the Hope and Justice Project. The empathy, wisdom, and guidance of a complex network of systems that these workers employ is nothing short of remarkable. Advocates sat with us during the initial shock and later soul wrenching grief. They were present when we had to inform her children and my children of the loss of their mother and favorite Aunt. They held our hand, hugged us, and held us up. They emoted a sense of calm, love, and support that no words can capture. Through a week of terror, a team of staff from the Hope and Justice Project assisted us in planning for our safety while law enforcement searched for the perpetrator of the crime. They provided valuable information about what to expect from the initial court appearances. Two years later, they were still by our side as we endured a week-long murder trial. They supported us in delivering witness statements and advocating for a life sentence for this senseless violence. There are no words that can capture the profound gratitude I have for this agency.

Nobody knows or expects when tragedy may occur in their life and tragedy does not discriminate. I never expected that my family and I would be the recipient of this service. I am only one person. My family is only one family. How many countless individuals and families has this organization and their staff quietly supported? How many hands have they held? How many frightened children have they comforted? How many lives have they saved? The value of an organization such as this is immeasurable. Funding this organization is an investment in humanity. The mission of the Hope and Justice Project results in safer communities and improves the lives of many. Loss of such a valuable program would be devastating and have far reaching effects across a wide section of our

population. Please provide the much needed funding to keep this vital program alive.

Sincerely,

Pamela M. DuBois