

Testimony of Denise Scuderi on behalf of Partners for Peace  
In Support of LD 875, An Act to Fund Essential Services for Victims of Domestic Violence  
March 19, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representatives Meyers, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Denise Scuderi. I live in Sebec, Maine. I am testifying in support of LD 875 as the Board Chair of Partners for Peace, serving Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties, to share why this critical funding is so important for victims of domestic violence.

I am also a nurse, a mother, a concerned community member and I grew up in a home that was affected by domestic violence. Some of my most vivid memories as a little girl were of my father pushing my mother down the stairs and my brother trying to defend her, so was thrown up the stairs by his hair. We fled and relocated out of state. Years later, I remember my stepfather, in the process of moving out, coming into our home taking all the furniture and throwing the clothes that were being washed out of the washer and onto the floor along with all the food from the refrigerator. He pushed my pregnant mother off the back of the moving truck and left us with nothing. At that time, growing up in the south, there were not any domestic violence resource centers, instead victims had to rely solely on churches and other limited resources. This is no longer the case, and we need to protect these funds. No mother, child, or anyone for that matter should have to struggle alone for basic needs or safety.

By supporting LD 875 we can continue offering these critical services in Maine. One of these includes the 24/7 helpline which offers the victim supportive listening, a caring voice, and helpful resources. It is important to let them know that they are not alone. When a victim needs a safe place, shelters are available in our area that can house families together with the family pet so that they can feel safe and have a bit of normalcy. Advocates can help victims navigate the confusing legal system and facilitate available resources. In today's world there are less volunteers which makes everyone do more with less resources. Please support this funding so that the victims of domestic violence in Maine do not go without. We have the power to protect our vulnerable community members.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my story and my request seeking support for this important issue.

Respectfully,

Denise M. Scuderi, RN  
Board Chair, Partners for Peace

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