

Testimony of Melissa Doore
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 Melissa Doore, I live in Penobscot County, and I am testifying in support of LD 875, An Act to Fund Essential Services for Victims of Domestic Violence.

I am a survivor of domestic abuse, and these services saved my life. My story began in 2006 when I endured terrorizing acts of violence, including having the barrel of a gun jammed into my throat while my abuser told our 2-year-old daughter to say "bye-bye" to mama. Other terrifying incidents included sexual violence - punishment as consequences for my behavior.

He made death threats with well thought-out and detailed plans on how to get rid of my body. He brought me to the location where my body would be disposed of. He told me he would liquidate my body by MOE, "Molten Oxide Electrolysis". This is a fancy way of saying he would melt my body like metal. He threatened, "your body will melt, including bones. No one will find you."

As time went on, the abuse got worse. My daughter was getting older, and she started having to bear his abusive tactics. My protection was not working anymore. One night I found myself at the Emergency Department getting stitches. It was there I saw a pamphlet for the domestic violence resource center known today as New Hope Midcoast. I didn't know it at the time, but my life was about to change.

The next day when my abuser left for work, I made the call to their 24-Hour Helpline and I spoke with an advocate, who I will call Mary. Mary believed me and this meant everything to me. She supported me for two whole years. During this time, New Hope provided us with a hotel room, and we eventually moved into a shelter. She guided me through the legal system, supported me in leaving and divorcing my abuser, and helped me gain full custody of my daughter. I went back to school, obtained a job at a pharmacy, bought a vehicle and was accepted into a rental assistance program and eventually gained housing independence. If it wasn't for these programs and Mary's support, I would not be where I am today.

Fast forward to the present day: Here I stand proud, successful, independent and have the freedom to make my own choices. I have the privilege of helping other survivors as a domestic violence advocate at Partners for Peace. I can only hope to be a "Mary" for someone else.

I choose to be here with you today as living proof that without these services, my daughter's and my life would have looked a lot different. Without these services, I might not be here all.

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

Melissa Doore