



Consumer Council System of Maine
A Voice for Consumers of Mental Health Services

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April 9, 2025

Good morning, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

My name is Simonne Maline. I am the Executive Director for the Consumer Council System of Maine. I am here today on behalf of the CCSM to testify in strong support of **LD 1239: “An Act to Require Data Collection on and Reporting of Psychiatric Hospital Resources and Transparency in Denials of Emergency Involuntary Admissions to Psychiatric Hospitals.”**

The Consumer Council System of Maine is a public instrumentality written into State Statute by the Maine Legislature to serve in an advisory capacity and to provide legislators with guidance and advice regarding the delivery of effective and appropriate adult mental health services from those served by them.

This bill addresses critical gaps in transparency and accountability within Maine’s psychiatric hospital system. This legislation is vital to improving access to emergency psychiatric care and ensuring the efficient use of resources. Psychiatric hospitals currently have significant discretion in denying emergency admissions, often without providing clear explanations or actionable guidance for reconsideration. LD 1239 mandates detailed written explanations for denials, which will help referring hospitals understand the specific reasons behind these decisions and identify circumstances under which admissions might be reconsidered. Transparency in these processes is essential to ensuring fairness and procedural justice, especially for vulnerable individuals seeking care.

The bill also requires daily reporting of inpatient bed capacity and occupancy, made available in real-time on a publicly accessible website. This daily data will empower healthcare providers and policymakers to make informed decisions about resource allocation and address deficiencies in staffing or infrastructure. Furthermore, biennial reporting on statewide trends will provide a comprehensive view of utilization patterns, enabling targeted interventions to improve psychiatric care access.

Importantly, the Department of Health and Human Services will identify systemic deficiencies contributing to admission denials and recommend necessary resources. This ensures that Maine can address root causes—whether they involve staffing shortages, funding gaps, or other barriers—and work toward meaningful solutions.

LD 1239 strikes a balance between accountability and operational feasibility. While it requires additional reporting from psychiatric hospitals, this effort is justified by the potential benefits: improved transparency, better resource management, and enhanced care for individuals in crisis. Hospitals must prioritize patient needs over convenience or discretion.



In conclusion, LD 1239 is a necessary step toward creating a more transparent, equitable, and effective psychiatric care system in Maine. I urge you to vote **Ought to Pass** on **LD 1239** for the benefit of our peers who often get stuck in EDs sometimes for weeks at a time and our healthcare system as a whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Simonne Maline

Executive Director
