



Testimony of Mark Eves, Executive Director

LD 1509 A Resolve, to Maintain Access to Home and Community-based Services for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, or Brain Injury.

April 23, 2025

Good afternoon, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Mark Eves. I am the Executive Director of Woodfords Family Services and I appreciate the opportunity to come before the Committee to provide testimony on LD 1509, A Resolve, to Maintain Access to Home and Community-based Services for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, or Brain Injury.

Woodfords Family Services is a nonprofit social service organization that provides residential, clinical, educational, and family support programs to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities across the state. We serve children and adults in 15 of our 16 counties, with the majority of our consumers in York, Cumberland, Androscoggin, and Kennebec counties. Founded in 1967, Woodfords currently provides direct services to approximately 2,000 consumers each year. We employ 450 staff and have more than 200 contracted Shared Living providers helping us meet our mission. Our Section 21 and 29 Waiver services include Agency Home Supports, Shared Living, and Community Supports.

Some of my best days at work are when I get to hear about the successes of a consumer and the joy in a parent's voice because of their son or daughter's accomplishments. I also hear the real-life impact on consumers and family members when we need to close a program or delay services because of growing waitlists. The devastating loss of a home, community, and social connections negatively impact consumers and families. We do everything we can to prevent this from happening but unfortunately the system is stressed.

LD 1509 was originally introduced after a growing concern that rates were not publicly made available as HBCS services have been challenged with a variety of factors that have made it difficult to remain sustainable. We have run significant deficits while waiting for the new rates to be made available and implemented. We had hopes that the new rates would bring relief once implemented. As you have heard, last week the Department made the Burns rates for

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Woodfords FAMILY SERVICES

sections 18, 20, 21, and 29 available to providers for public comment. We have spent the week trying to assess the impact to consumers and families but many variables remain unknown to accurately assess the impact. While I had hoped to have strong support at this juncture for implementing the rates, there are simply too many unknowns to fully evaluate the adequacy of the proposed rates. We are currently working on submitting comments to the Department which we hope will result in needed changes in order for the proposed rates to help sustain the system.

In addition to the uncertainty in the rate model we are also concerned that there has been no funding identified to support the rates or the launch of the Lifespan Waiver in the two year budget. This bill would address that.

We will continue to work with the department and committee members in order to assess what needs to happen in order to have rates that are adequate and stabilize what is today a very fragile system of care.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mark Eves

Executive Director

Woodfords Family Services

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