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Findhelp

Good afternoon, Chair Kuhn and honorable members of this committee and thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Toby Landau, and I am here on behalf of Findhelp, a social care data company that has proudly connected the citizens of Maine to a network of over 4,000 free and reduced cost services for more than a decade. We are speaking in strong support of An Act to Enact the Maine Online Data Privacy Act (LD1822), and we deeply appreciate the committee's leadership in moving this critical legislation forward.

As technology continues to shape every aspect of our lives—from the way we work, interact with our families, to how we access essential services—data privacy has never been more important. In this landscape, **LD 1822 stands as a vital safeguard** for the privacy of Maine residents, ensuring that individuals are protected from the misuse, exploitation and inappropriate sale of their personal information.

Findhelp's mission is to connect people in need to the programs that serve them with dignity and ease. Our platform serves over 292,000 users across Maine, helping people access essential social care services—everything from housing and food stability to transportation and employment. We proudly partner with Maine Health, Maine 211, Northern Light, Mainely Teeth and several other organizations that serve Mainers.

As the nation's largest social care network and closed-loop referral system, we handle significant amounts of extraordinarily sensitive data. This includes **social care data**—information that ranges from housing status to food insecurity to transportation needs.

Since our founding in 2010, we have **committed to never selling data**. Our network is built on a consumer-directed privacy model where individuals opt in to share their information for each referral, and access to referral history is permission-based. **Our industry moves at the speed of trust**; and our users trust us with their most personal information because we protect it.

To quote one of our customers, Ayla Burke, with Mainely Teeth, many of the people they "serve have come from dangerous situations. If we don't protect their information and privacy, we're risking their lives in ways that we don't even understand."

That's why we strongly support the Maine Online Data Privacy Act. This bill represents a step toward ensuring that all personal data is protected. The bill's provisions on **data minimization, consumer rights, and the protection of sensitive data** are essential, as they ensure that data is only collected when necessary and that individuals have the right to access, correct, and delete their data.

We believe the bill can be strengthened to define social care data and explicitly include it among the most sensitized data and banning the sale or monetization of data collected in systems like Findhelp. **We encourage the committee to review similar Data Privacy bills**

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being considered in the Massachusetts Legislature, HD3628 and SD2264, respectively sponsored by Representative Giannino and Senator Mark.

In a world where data brokers and privacy violations are common, **LD1822 represents the kind of forward-thinking legislation we need to safeguard the privacy of our citizens.** By setting clear standards for how companies collect, process, and store personal data, Maine will lead the way in protecting its residents in the digital age. As technology continues to evolve, it's critical that our laws evolve with it to protect the fundamental rights of Maine residents. This bill is an essential step toward that goal, and we at Findhelp strongly support its passage.

Thank you for your time and consideration.