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Testimony of the Office of Aging and Disability Services

Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

In support of LD 2021, *An Act to Add an Online Option for Reporting of Suspected Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of Adults*

Sponsor: Representative Meyer
Hearing Date: January 14, 2026

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Betsy Hopkins, and I serve as the Director within the Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) in the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. I am here today to testify in support of LD 2021, *An Act to Add an Online Option for Reporting of Suspected Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of Adults*.

Under current law, mandated reporters are required to report suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation (ANE) of adults to the Department by telephone. LD 2021 would add an online reporting option for mandated reporters, providing an additional method for submitting reports. This change would bring Maine statute into alignment with federal regulations finalized in June 2024, which require states to offer at least two methods for reporting, one of which must be online.

The Office of Aging and Disability Services' Adult Protective Services Intake Unit already allows members of the public who are not mandated reporters to submit reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation through an online portal. LD 2021 would clarify and update our statutory framework to allow mandated reporters to also use this existing APS intake system.

Maine has until May of 2028 to comply with the APS Federal Law. LD 2021 addresses one component of that federal law and provides mandated reporters with an additional, accessible option for reporting concerns. For these reasons, I support LD 2021.

Thank you for your time and attention. I would be happy to answer any questions and remain available for the work session