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Testimony of Representative Holly B. Stover presenting
LD 2108, An Act to Establish the Suicide Mortality Review Panel
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Representative Holly Stover, and I am honored to represent House District 48. Thank you for the opportunity to introduce **LD 2108, An Act to Establish the Suicide Mortality Review Panel**.

I have sponsored this bill on behalf of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention within the Department of Health and Human Services. As indicated by the title, this bill would establish the Suicide Mortality Review Panel, a multidisciplinary panel that would review the trends of deaths by suicide in Maine. If passed, this initiative would build on work led by the Bureau of Veteran Services and would include participation from the Department of Public Safety, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, as well as other key stakeholders.

As you may know, we have several existing mortality review panels in the state. They each provide critical insight into the various topics they focus on. However, we do not have a similar group focused on death by suicide. This is needed, as Maine sadly has one of the highest rates of suicide in New England. With the recent establishment of the Office of Injury and Violence Prevention, we now have an office that not only has the expertise but also the capacity to take on this work. This bill is designed to help us collect needed data to better understand suicide in our state that will help to inform preventative policy changes in the future.

I hope that you will join me in supporting this legislation. The Department will follow my testimony, and I ask that you hold any questions you may have for the Department.

Thank you for your consideration.