

DISABILITY RIGHTS MAINE

February 17, 2026

Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs
State House, Room 228
Augusta, ME 04333

Committee on Health and Human Services
Cross Building, Room 209
Augusta, ME 04330

Dear Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and Honorable Members of both Committees;

On behalf of Disability Rights Maine, I am here to express our sincere gratitude for your ongoing support for our work, and for your consideration of the proposed \$20,000 funding increase.

We fully recognize the fiscal constraints facing the State of Maine and the complexity of the decisions before the Committee. In this challenging budget environment, your willingness to consider even a modest increase reflects a meaningful commitment to the protection and advocacy of the rights of Maine people with disabilities. This increase is not only greatly needed, but deeply appreciated.

Disability Rights Maine serves as the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy system for our state, charged with safeguarding the civil and human rights of individuals with disabilities. Through legal representation, systemic advocacy, investigations of abuse and neglect, and public policy engagement, we assist thousands of Mainers each year in securing access to education, healthcare, housing, employment, and community-based services.

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Demand for our services continues to rise, while operational costs, including personnel, technology, and compliance obligations, have increased significantly. At the same time, the complexity and urgency of cases involving abuse, neglect, and rights violations requires sustained staffing capacity and specialized expertise. In this context, the proposed funding increase is both necessary and impactful. Even modest funding adjustments have a meaningful impact on our ability to respond effectively, maintain staffing capacity, and continue delivering high-quality advocacy to those who depend on us.

This \$20,000 increase would help sustain critical services, strengthen protections for individuals at risk, and preserve access to justice for Maine people with disabilities. It represents an investment not only in our organization, but in the safety, independence, and civil rights of Mainers with disabilities.

Thank you for your leadership, your careful stewardship of public resources, and your ongoing dedication to the well-being and rights of Maine residents. We are truly grateful for your support and partnership and deeply appreciative of your consideration

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Moody". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Kim Moody
Chief Executive Officer
Disability Rights Maine