

Testimony of Ann-Marie Mayberry

In Support of LD 2212, Section Z363 and Part G-1

Dear Senator Rotundo and Ingwersen, Representatives Gattine and Meyer, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, My name is Ann-Marie Mayberry. I am from Cape Elizabeth, the CEO of 3Rivers, the parent of a son diagnosed with Asperger's at age eight, and a long-standing member of the Maine Developmental Services Oversight and Advisory Board, or MDSOAB.

I am here today in strong support of LD 2212, Section Z363, and Part G-1.

The MDSOAB is a 15-member, statutorily created board whose sole responsibility is to provide independent oversight of programs and services for adults with intellectual disabilities and autism, primarily those administered by DHHS. Our charge is to provide advice and systemic recommendations to the Commissioner, the Governor, and the Legislature on policies, budgets, and legislation affecting the rights and interests of this population.

In today's environment, independent oversight is not optional—it is essential. We have all seen recent, deeply troubling reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation affecting the IDD population. These incidents underscore why the Legislature created this board and why our work matters.

However, the MDSOAB cannot fulfill its statutory duties with its current budget of \$137,682. That amount covers only a part-time executive director, a contracted bookkeeper, minimal administrative costs, and modest stipends for self-advocates and Regional Review Committee members. We are not even able to afford an office. There is simply no capacity for meaningful oversight.

The \$58,715 increase proposed by DAFS will allow for competitive wages and benefits for a part-time Executive Director and a full-time Program Manager—positions essential to performing the work the statute requires.

Equally important is the requested language change in Part G-1, allowing funds to carry forward year to year. Currently, the Board has no cash-flow flexibility, which severely limits our ability to operate effectively.

Notably, the Board's contract structure has not changed since 2010. During that same period, the compounded CPI has increased by more than 47%. This request represents the first meaningful funding adjustment in nearly 30 years.

The MDSOAB has been chronically underfunded for decades. Your support of this DAFS request will finally allow the Board to carry out the independent oversight role the Legislature intended—protecting some of Maine's most vulnerable citizens.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very respectfully,
Ann-Marie Mayberry

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