

**Good Afternoon! To Sen. Rafferty & Rep. Brennan & to the Honorable Members of this Committee in Education & Cultural Affairs:**

Deborah Parker Pres. Future Visions Youth Development FVYD 501c3 Non- Profit Org.-W. Rockport, ME.

**I am in Opposition to LD 829:**

This Maine Ed. Committee knows me well, I have been before you for 2 decades with work that would recover the kids who are troubled, anxious, and struggling within schools. This bill LD 829 suggested text is for a smaller ratio of Student to Staff i.e., this staff- a School Counselor & with that staff having new professional opportunity with (6) Advanced Behavioral Analyst courses. I think advancing education is great. Meanwhile, our FVYD Org. and I have been here to resolve critical issues **for Students** in Maine Education for years. In fact, during this last decade the Maine Education door has not been opened for any of this **Community Nonprofit Student Recovery work** we offered-with that Evidentiary data you want! Again, we have the Answers you seek. With a **Masters MPS in Professional Studies in Human Relations & as a Maine Licensed Professional Counselor -conditional. With experience in Youth Suicide Units, Adolescent Crisis units and Family Support - & for Program development in several Mental Health treatment settings...to include Dept. of Juvenile Justice DJJ. I suggest this bill LD 829 is taking us in the wrong direction, once again.** Adding a Counselor is great help to schools --but it is not the right answer! Instead, you are only fueling the fire; and adding the “scapegoat for blame.”- When I suggest today that we can ***actually put the fire OUT,*** instead. So, let’s do that instead!

Lets Recover these 40% of troubled, anxious and failing Students’ today in their classrooms & with their Peers struggles- first! Lets work for Wellness; instead of waiting for more ILLNESS. I prefer we ***directly Recover our Kids with their own Life Skills.*** I prefer a Well Health Promotions pathway- by offering that Educational future filled with new Learning Choices... instead of treatments. Kids are resilient. Then should mental illness treatments be still needed; those will be less in number. **The LD 829 Professionals-** our Social workers & Counselors -should be Advanced Behavioral Analysts in a year or so. By then with our FVYD work done; they may well have a better chance to be direct, targeted and so much more effective. **With this LD 829 bill-** Offering for “More Hands on Deck” is always helpful, but; this bill is not the answer we need today! Today we need to RECOVER our 40% of stressed Students & Teachers still *waiting back in the schools* & barely breathing. They are looking for new Answers, today! We have them, today! Thank you, DP