



Health and Human Services Committee

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Written Testimony in Support of LD 716

An Act To Enhance and Improve the Maine Developmental Services Oversight and Advisory Board and To Establish the Aging and Disability Mortality Review Panel

Good morning, Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of LD 716 *An Act To Enhance and Improve the Maine Developmental Services Oversight and Advisory Board and To Establish the Aging and Disability Mortality Review Panel*. My name is Laura Cordes, executive director of the Maine Association for Community Service Providers. MACSP is the association of more than 70 organizations providing direct service and support to children, adolescents, and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to live and thrive in our Maine communities.

MACSP supports both provisions of the bill which would establish the Aging and Disability Mortality Review Panel to review deaths of and serious injuries to all adults receiving Home and Community Based Services, as well as make changes to the laws governing the Maine Developmental Services Oversight and Advisory Board (MDSOAB), moving the budget of the board from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Department of Administrative and Financial Services and requiring disclosure of final reports of investigations pursuant to the Adult Protective Services Act to the board.

We are thankful for Representative Madigan's leadership and commitment to bringing this bill forward again. MACSP last came before the committee in support of a creating a Mortality Review Panel in 2019, two years after the 2017 report which found that Maine failed to provide appropriate oversight and review of the deaths of at least one hundred and thirty-three (133) Maine people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the short sample years reviewed.

This panel is in alignment with the recommendations found in the subsequent "[*Joint Report: Ensuring Beneficiary Health and Safety in Group Homes Through State Implementation of Comprehensive Compliance Oversight*](#)" by the Office of Inspector General, Administration on Community Living, and Office for Civil Rights. It creates individual reviews, annual and quarterly reporting, trend analyses, and an overall mechanism to provide proactive recommendations to reduce the risk of death or other

adverse outcomes for Maine people. It calls for informed and expert analysis in a way we simply have not established yet.

We were disappointed to see the funding in the Governor's budget for a panel removed last March but remain hopeful that it will remain in the biennial budget now, as proposed, to support a panel coordinator housed in the Maine CDC.

It is long overdue. We owe it to the people who rely on us for their care, support, and protection to pass this bill and establish the panel.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me with questions you may have.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laura Cordes, Executive Director
laura.cordes@meacsp.org