



**Northern Light  
Health**

**LD 1080 Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services To Update  
the Rights of Recipients of Mental Health Services**

**Testimony in Support**

**April 7, 2021**

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Lisa Harvey-McPherson RN, I am here today providing testimony on behalf of Northern Light Health and our member organizations to speak in support of this bill. Northern Light Health member organizations include 10 hospitals located in southern, central, eastern and northern Maine, 8 nursing facilities, air and ground ambulance, behavioral health, addiction treatment, pharmacy, primary and specialty care practices and a state-wide home care and hospice program. Ninety three percent of Maine's population lives in the Northern Light Health service area. Northern Light Health is also proud to be one of Maine's largest employers with over 12,000 employees statewide.

Many years ago the 110th Maine Legislature enacted into law, 34 M.R.S.A. section 2004, now 34-B M.R.S.A. section 3003, entitled "An Act Authorizing and Directing the Bureau of Mental Health to Enhance and Protect the Rights of Recipients of Mental Health Services," that directed the Bureau to promulgate rules, under the Administrative Procedures Act, in a number of areas of patient/client rights. The intent of the Legislature was to provide a process whereby the Division of Mental Health, as the lead administrative agency for institutional and community mental health services, would develop comprehensive rules in this complex area, taking into account clinical, social and administrative factors while promoting and safeguarding the rights of people receiving mental health services. The rules were initially promulgated on October 1, 1984, were amended October 1, 1986, October 1, 1989 and January 1, 1995.

Recognizing that the rules were last updated 26 years ago, it is important that the rules defining rights of recipients of mental health services be reviewed and updated as outlined in the Resolve. It is also important that the department engage a stakeholder group in determining best practice treatment models for future rulemaking. Clinicians from a variety of Maine behavioral health organizations must be involved in this process to reach consensus recommendations. We ask that you add to the Resolve a requirement that the department establish a clinician stakeholder group for this purpose.

Thank you.

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**Northern Light Health**

Acadia Hospital  
A.R. Gould Hospital  
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Blue Hill Hospital  
C.A. Dean Hospital  
Eastern Maine Medical Center  
Home Care & Hospice  
Inland Hospital  
Maine Coast Hospital  
Mercy Hospital  
Northern Light Health Foundation  
Sebasticook Valley Hospital