



April 7, 2021

Senator Ned Claxton, Chair
Representative Michele Meyer, Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
Cross Office Building, Room 209
Augusta, Maine 04333

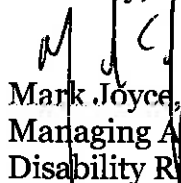
Re: Testimony Supporting LD 1009, Resolve, To Create a Health Care
Ombudsman Position To Serve in Maine's County Jails

Dear Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Joint Standing
Committee on Health and Human Services:

My name is Mark Joyce and I am a managing attorney at Disability Rights Maine.
Thank you for the opportunity for Disability Rights Maine (DRM) to provide testimony
in support of LD 1009 as amended.

In DRM's work advocating for individuals with mental health conditions in all settings,
including county jails, the needs of individuals is not just mental health treatment while
in the jail, but the full scope of resources that may help the person not come back when
released. DRM understands the amendment to this bill creates a work group to look into
what resources needs are and how to get them to those in the county jail. In our
experience at DRM a person in jail with mental health treatment needs may also need
other legal services in areas such as family law or information about substance use
disorder treatment options. This expertise should all be in one place, and accessible to
inmates in the jails. DRM hopes this work group will be able to identify what a resource
navigator would look like who can assist those in jails get the resources they need and
hopefully use those resources to avoid any further incarceration. For the foregoing
reasons, DRM supports LD 1009 as amended. Thank you for your time and
consideration.

Sincerely,


Mark Joyce, Esq.
Managing Attorney
Disability Rights Maine

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MAINE'S PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY AGENCY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES