

Joe Pickering
Bangor

My testimony is much more than I ironic. Many years ago, as executive director of Community Health Services I worked with then Senator John Nutting re: creating the state's first community assertive treatment team. I did not know then that my son Christopher Paul Pickering would have his onset with severe schizophrenia and become a client of CHCS's treatment team. It was highly successful. However, his allotted time was used up while he was at then named state hospital Bangor Mental Health Institute. Chris never became an ACT TEAM client again and eventually he began a long long decline. My wife and I also learned the hell on earth pain of being parents of our beloved son. So many cloudy days with some sun light in between. CHCS worked with Chris for 26 years trying to help him. So, did the DHHS Caseworkers assigned to him. Due to the rigidity of that state law which definitely needs changing to prevent unnecessary deaths and jail time for brain disorders and addictions and so MUCH MORE. These factors are what is outlined in this bill to help correct. I worked at CHCS for 30 years. believe that over decades our State Governor is financially starving to death it's community agencies including the Act Team. It is now much worse at this time. Had my son continued as a client, he would not be dead and would be living a better life. Please read the story of our Christopher's life and death. May you approve this bill LD 582 as well as LD 196 and LD 1147. We do NOT need another study such as LD 1262. There are urgent needs that need to be met to prevent deaths and putting more people with Brain Disorders and Addictions into jails.

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