

Jennifer Brooking
Cape Elizabeth

To the Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,
I am writing to you in regards to LD 499, LD 962, LD 1360 and LD 1490 and requesting that you support these bills. They pertain to the much-needed attention on the waiting lists for Home and Community Based Services for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities, Autism, Brain Injury and other related conditions and eliminate waitlists for certain Mainecare services.

I greatly appreciate the efforts of Representative Craven, Representative Millett, Senator Keim and all others cosponsoring these bills.

Some of my most favorite people qualify for HCBS and Mainecare services and my daughter, Allison, is one of them.

Allison will be turning 18 this summer. I wish I could tell you that I am excited for this milestone as many of her peers parents are. Allison's classmates are college searching and looking forward to full and fulfilling futures. However, Allison will be placed on a waiting list for services that she will need to live safely and be part of her community. Not a big reason to celebrate.

Over the years I have had several discussions with friends, teachers, providers and case managers regarding the transition to adulthood for individuals with disabilities. I am not alone in my feelings about this transition. It is an arduous process, which requires copious amounts of paperwork, meetings with case managers and other providers and great advocacy. It is stressful and very emotional.

To go through all of this with the knowledge that Allison may have to wait years to access these services is depressing and quite frightening.

Having an interruption in services is very difficult for Allison. She, like so many other individuals with developmental disabilities, is known to regress in skills, losing skills she has worked incredibly hard to master, if she goes without services even for a short period.

When services are consistently accessed, people with developmental disabilities can achieve many things; independence, employment, and most importantly, a better quality of life.

Please support LD 499, LD 962, LD 1360 and LD 1490 so that my daughter and the many others that need and will need these medically necessary services will be able to access what they are entitled to. Supporting these bills will help individuals achieve a better, safer outcome for their future.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Brooking, Cape Elizabeth