



April 21, 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 in Support of LD 1490, An Act to Improve Home- and
Community- Based Services for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities, Autism,
Brain Injury, and Other Related Conditions

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

My name is Lauren Wille 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 1490. Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS), also called “waiver” services, allow individuals with developmental disabilities, brain injury, and other related conditions to be supported in their homes and communities, instead of in institutions. Not only do HCBS help people with disabilities to live richer, fuller, happier lives, but society as a whole benefits by encouraging civic engagement and prioritizing employment.

DRM appreciates the language amendments to service delivery in this bill, which recognizes HCBS for what it should be—a system of “service and supports” rather than a system of “care.” This distinction is important. We also applaud this bill for its focus on increased self-determination, promotion of less restrictive placements, and competitive integrated employment.

We would ask that an amendment be considered to ensure that “brain injury and other related conditions” be included in all instances that refer to “intellectual disabilities and autism” in order to create consistency and to ensure that individuals with brain injury or other related conditions are not excluded from the ideals promoted in this bill.

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MAINE'S PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY AGENCY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

DRM supports the waitlist reporting aspects of the bill. In addition to the data already included in the bill, DRM would support reporting requirements that would include the areas of the state where individuals on the waitlist live, and how long, in days, individuals have been on a waitlist for each of the waivers.

For the foregoing reasons, DRM supports LD 1490 as written, and we would encourage the Committee to consider the amendments proposed above.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L. Wille".

Lauren Wille, Esq.
Managing Attorney
Disability Rights Maine