



May 3, 2021

Good Afternoon, Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services.

STATEWIDE CONSUMER COUNCIL

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My name is Simonne Maline. I am the Executive Director for the Consumer Council System of Maine (CCSM). I am here today on behalf of the CCSM to testify neither for nor against **LD 869: Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services To Review the Progressive Treatment Program and Processes by Which a Person May Be Involuntarily Admitted to a Psychiatric Hospital or Receive Court-ordered Community Treatment.**

The Consumer Council System of Maine is a public instrumentality written into State Statute by the Maine Legislature to serve in an advisory capacity and to provide legislators with guidance and advice regarding the delivery of effective and appropriate adult mental health services from those served by them.

It is our understanding that the progressive treatment program and court commitment processes are already permitted by state law. Before we look at expanding places where this is allowed can we look to make sure the current program is functioning, so we tread lightly when we are talking about forced treatment and people's rights being taken away.

The CCSM unequivocally believes that treatment should be done with persons in their communities, not ordered by a court system and without coercion. Coercion only serves to exacerbate mistrust and can be a barrier to receiving needed services.*

If a workgroup is formed to review the current progressive treatment program, we would ask for a decrease in hospital providers (they have a significant amount of members) and we request that a member of the CCSM and other consumers be added as well as a mental health disability attorney/advocate should be appointed regardless of any other stakeholder appointments. Persons with lived experience offer a unique perspective and can add a great deal of expertise in this matter.

*Here are several links to research done on the the connection between psychiatric coercion, hospitalization and suicide.



<https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2019-31473-001>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5710249/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21740345/>

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Simonne Maline

Executive Director
