

Laura Snyder
BATH

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyers, Distinguished Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services:

I am writing to you in opposition to LD 869. My name is Laura Snyder, and I live in Bath, Maine. I am writing as the aunt of a young man with schizophrenia and anosognosia and as a retired occupational therapist who worked with people with brain injury. Over the past 20 years, my caseload included many people with a mental illness diagnosis in addition to brain injury. This included at least five people with mental illness who committed suicide and one with mental illness who was convicted of homicide.

My concern about LD 869 is that it will delay accessibility of the PTP program for persons with mental illness. I believe a better solution would be to pass LD 1090 which would offer immediate access to the PTP program. Data could then be collected as patients receive the treatment they so desperately need. There is presently a great deal of evidence to support programs like Maine's PTP program in other states.

My nephew's experiences with the PTP program are compatible with this evidence. When not on medication, my nephew has experienced homelessness and extreme paranoia. He has also been the perpetrator of violence which has resulted in three incarcerations. When he has been mandated to participate in the PTP program on medication, he has been able to live with support in an apartment, hold a job, play in a band, and take college classes. While accessing PTP services, he has never had a violent episode.

I implore you to incorporate research and data collection while expanding the PTP program through LD 1090. In this way we could reach research objectives without withholding the PTP expansion which is so desperately needed. Thank you.