

Meredith Torrey
Holden
LD 632

Dear Senator Chip Curry, Representative Tiffany Roberts, and members of the IDEA committee:

My name is Meredith Torrey and I live in Holden, ME. I am writing today to ask you to support LD 632: An Act to Amend the Social Work Education Loan Repayment Program. I am writing to you as a graduate of the University of Maine, School of Social Work. I believe that this bill will serve all people of the state of Maine as social workers are necessary to the health of Maine.

This issue is significant because I am one of the many individuals who had to get out student loans in order to pursue her dreams. I am a social worker who practices therapy in a private setting in Bangor, Maine. Since I work in a private setting, I am not eligible for student loan forgiveness. My speciality is working with survivors of sexual trauma, children who have suffered abuse, and others who have been oppressed and marginalized. Many of my clients are lower income. Is my work with clients any less important and necessary just because I work in the private sector? According to student loan forgiveness practices, it is. I had to take a job in the private sector to cover the high cost of my student loan payments. Due to my high student loan payments, I am unable to put extra money into the economy, especially small businesses in Bangor, Holden, Brewer, or any surrounding towns.

I have witnessed the impact of this issue in my own community. Many of the social workers I graduated with had to take out student loans in order to pursue their dreams of helping people in Maine. Social workers tend to work long hours and put much of their own money into supplies and the necessary education needed for our licenses. We are unable to give back to our community economically.

I ask you to please support LD 632 to help the necessary social workers of Maine repay their education loans. If you would like more information about how this is impacting my community, and me personally, please feel free to contact me directly. Ending student loan debt is necessary for building a better economy and a stronger nation.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Meredith Torrey, LCSW