



Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine
The unified voice for Maine's community behavioral health providers

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Testimony in Support of LD 693

An Act To Make the Pilot Program Providing Mental Health Case Management Services to Veterans a Permanent Program

Sponsored by Rep. Tiffany Roberts

3.22.2021

Good morning Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans & Legal Affairs. I am Malory Shaughnessy, a resident of Westbrook, and the Executive Director of the Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services. The Alliance is the statewide association representing the majority of Maine's safety net community based mental health and substance use treatment providers. The Alliance advocates for the implementation of sound policies and evidence-based practices that serve to enhance the quality and effectiveness of our behavioral health care system.

On behalf of the Alliance, I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 693, An Act To Make the Pilot Program Providing Mental Health Case Management Services to Veterans a Permanent Program.

Many of the Alliance members provide needed services to our Maine veterans across the state. They provide mental health and substance use treatment and recovery support, in outpatient settings, in residential services, and sometimes to our veterans that have unfortunately become involved in the corrections system, or in our state hospitals.

The needs of these veterans can be complex, and can involve needed assistance in sustaining the social determinants of health – the factors that allow for sustaining successful recovery. Determinants such as economic stability, community, access to transportation, education and life opportunities, access to food, quality and safety of housing, social supports, and access to health care. This work demands the work of case managers to work with these veterans and to assure that these needs are met. Only then can they address the complex factors of their behavioral health.

We wholeheartedly endorse and support the need for this to become a permanent program. We also urge the department to reach out to all providers through a Request for Proposals for these services that is an open process -- and not a sole sourcing of these services to any one provider. The highest quality providers should be chosen in each geographic area, and all areas of the state should be covered.

Thank you for hearing our testimony and I would be happy to get any additional information for you that you might need.