

FRANNIE PEABODY CENTER

Comprehensive HIV & AIDS Services

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March 22, 2021

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Joint Standing Committee on
Health and Human Services
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Frannie Peabody Center, Maine's largest HIV/AIDS services organization, in support of LD 888 to continue funding for the critical services provided by organizations such as Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine (SARSSM).

Frannie Peabody Center works directly with individuals living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS, many of whom are survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Our agency depends on organizations like SARSSM for their expertise, knowledge, and support in coordinating critical care for Mainers who have experienced this type of trauma.

Additionally, our partnership with SARSSM has increased our capacity to reach those in need of our services who may otherwise not access us directly due to fear, stigma or isolation. This has become particularly evident since the onset of COVID-19. Frannie Peabody Center can supply discrete HIV home testing kits and prevention supplies while SARSSM provides a critical pathway for these services through their trusted relationships with their clients. This type of outreach goes above and beyond what Frannie Peabody Center would be able to accomplish independently.

SARSSM is a crucial part of the intricate network of social service providers in Maine that helps to strengthen our communities and provides a highly specialized and safe resource for individuals when there is nowhere else to turn.

I urge you to support LD 888 to preserve these vital programs and the impact they have on Mainers in need.

Respectfully,



Katie Rutherford
Executive Director
Frannie Peabody Center