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Testimony of Representative Tiffany D. Roberts presenting
LD 693, "An Act To Make the Pilot Program Providing Mental Health Case Management Services to Veterans a Permanent Program"
before the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

Good afternoon Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. I am Representative Tiffany Roberts, and I represent House District 6, which includes parts of North Berwick and South Berwick. I am here today to present **LD 693, An Act To Make the Pilot Program Providing Mental Health Case Management Services to Veterans a Permanent Program.**

During the 128th Legislature, [LD 1231](#), a resolve to examine the need for mental health care services and establish a pilot program to provide case management services to veterans, was passed into law. I believe that Congressman Golden has provided written testimony in regard to this.

In the 129th Legislature, I sponsored [LD 835](#), which was legislation that would have provided support to this program. Although this legislation passed out of this committee, it died upon conclusion of the Legislature due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The legislation before you today, LD 693, makes permanent the pilot program established in LD 1231 to provide ongoing mental health case management services to veterans after the pilot program ends. The emergency clause in this legislation is to ensure that the funding for this program does not lapse.

Each month, BVS assists veterans in submitting hundreds of claims for numerous programs and are successful in securing millions of dollars in awards for veterans and their families. According to the Maine Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services, the types of services provided in this program helps keep veterans from languishing on waitlists for services for which they are eligible and that case management services are more cost-effective than inpatient

psychiatric care. It is important that this work continues to support those who provide such an enormous service to our country.

I grew up in a military family, with both parents and stepparents serving in various branches. I am keenly aware of the sacrifices that our veterans make, and it is my experience that, in many cases, veterans tend to have a mindset that they need to handle situations on their own. When veterans do ask for help, that window of time to provide assistance can be very short. Help must be provided as quickly as possible, and the offer for help must be ongoing and readily available.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions or to provide you with any information for your upcoming work session.