

Testimony of Todd Goodwin, President,  
Maine Association for Community Service Providers (MACSP) and Chief Executive Officer,  
Community Partners, Inc.

Biddeford, ME

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

Testimony in Support of

*L.D. 967, An Act To Ensure Access to Community Services for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities or  
Autism*

Hearing Date: April 3, 2017

Senator Brakey, Representative Hymanson and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Todd Goodwin.

I submit this simple written testimony today as both the President of the Maine Association for Community Service Providers (MACSP) and the Chief Executive Officer of Community Partners, Inc. MACSP is the statewide association of organizations that provide services to children and adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. We have approximately 70 members and serve thousands of people in all 16 Maine counties. Community Partners, Inc. is a Biddeford-based non-profit agency that provides a continuum of services across three Maine counties.

I have the utmost respect for each of you in accepting the incredible challenge and awesome responsibility for navigating the complexity inherent in charting a course for our fellow Maine citizens who are most at risk for being left behind in a just and right society. The often inverse relationship between the availability of public dollars and the need that exists for so many makes your decisions all that more difficult, with ramifications at any given moment that literally can make the difference between life and death. And, for kicks, you have to deal with a whole lot of noise that can easily get in the way of what really matters.

Persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities and autism are indeed the most vulnerable among us. They are entirely reliant upon a state funded system of care that is built upon committed and engaged direct care workers. Unfortunately, as a consequence of declining rates of



reimbursement and the attendant adverse impact on the system's ability to attract and retain direct care workers, the system of care as we know it is perilously close to collapse. Moreover, there is no Plan B should this occur.

Our friends and loved ones with disabilities, in their reliance of a state funded system of care that is necessarily staff intensive, are at the whim of market forces for which they – and the providers upon whom they rely – have no control. Providers of services are price takers, not price setters. They have absolutely zero ability to influence a market that affects thousands of Mainers every day.

Providers of services to persons with disabilities employ tens of thousands of Mainers across our state and pump hundreds of millions of dollars into our local economies every day. They do this while simultaneously upholding the important Maine value of caring for people who cannot care for themselves.

LD 967 recognizes the critical interplay of quality care for those who cannot care for themselves and the economics of ensuring a stable workforce across our state that helps our communities grow and thrive. Our moral and statutory mandate to ensure persons with disabilities live with the dignity befitting all of us is entirely dependent upon those direct care workers who give so much every day.

I urge your support for LD 967. It will make a difference. It will save a system of care and will contribute to our state's economic vitality.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Goodwin

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'TG', with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the top of the letters.