*Thank you for agreeing to provide written testimony in support of LD 888.*

**About the Bill:**

In the last legislative session, Maine’s first increase in funding for sexual assault and domestic violence service providers in more than two decades was approved. However, those funds (referred to as Funds for Healthy Maine or FHM) were only appropriated for two years. This June, that FHM funding will run out, and our state’s prevention and victim advocacy services will see a $5 million deficit. LD 888: An Act to Ensure Ongoing Services for Victims of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence would ensure continued, vital funding for domestic and sexual violence services across the state.

In the Midcoast, FHM funding has allowed us to enhance the organizational planning and staffing of our prevention education team. As a result, our school-based prevention education participation has increased by 344% and our community-based prevention education participation has increased by 444%. That means over 5,000 school-aged children—and even more community members—have been able to learn about ways we can all work towards ending interpersonal violence in Maine communities.

Right now, one third of our staff members are partially or fully funded by FHM. Without funding to maintain our current team, our ability to provide prevention education and victim advocacy services in our Midcoast communities—especially services targeted towards youth—will be severely and directly impacted… just as we anticipate an increase in service needs as we come out of isolation from the pandemic. We need your help!

**Submitting Testimony:**
The hearing for LD 888 is scheduled for March 30, 2021. Testimony must be submitted (as a PDF or Word document) to jordan@mescasa.org no later than noon (12pm EST) **on Monday, March 29**. (Prior to March 29, testimony may also be submitted directly to SASSMM through our [online form](https://www.sassmm.org/supporting-ld-888.html).) The following information is required when submitting testimony:

* Your name
* Your town of residence (or the organization you represent)
* Your preferred email address

*IMPORTANT: Your name and your town of residence (or the organization you represent), as specified by you on this form, will accompany the publishing of your testimony online.*

**Sample Format for Testimony:**

DATE

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

My name is XXXXXXXXX and I am a resident of XXXXXX (OR I am submitting testimony on behalf of Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine).

I am submitting testimony in support of LD 888, An Act to Ensure Ongoing Services for Victims of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence.

[Your testimony about why sexual assault prevention and support services are important.]

Thank you for your support!