



April 21, 2020

Representative Chellie Pingree
Portland Office
2 Portland Fish Pier, Suite 304
Portland, ME 04101
(207) 774-5019

Greeting Representative Chellie Pingree,

Speaking Up For Us (SUFU) has been the self-advocacy network in Maine since 1993 and we are an established 501(c)3 non-profit. Self-Advocacy is part of the civil rights movement for people living with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) to advocate and voice their opinions on issues that are important to them. Our Board of Directors is made up 100% of adults living with I/DD, which makes us a very unique organization.

One of the federal level issues that has been very important to us is what we refer to as the **“Marriage Penalty Tax”**. Essentially, if two people who both live with disabilities want to get married and both receive Social Security they cannot unless they are willing/able to lose a portion of their income. People living with disabilities already live on a lot less money than people who do not have disabilities. We believe that the marriage penalty tax is another barrier that people with disabilities must overcome as we push to have true equality in our country.

On behalf of Speaking Up For Us and self-advocates in Maine, we want to **THANK YOU** for your work to sign onto **“H.R. 1529: To amend title XVI of the Social Security Act to provide that the supplemental security income benefits of adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities shall not be reduced by reason of marriage.”** This bill, if passed will make it easier for people who have disabilities to get married without losing part of their income.

People with disabilities want to be treated and have the same opportunities as everybody else. Your actions to sign onto this important legislation makes us feel supported in Washington D.C.

Thank you so much for all your hard work.

Sincerely,

Speaking Up For Us Self-Advocates from Maine



If you have further questions, please reach out to our Executive Director:

Monique Stairs, Interim Executive Director

Speaking Up For Us

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