

Langlin, Steven

From: Nadeau, Karen
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 4:56 PM
To: Langlin, Steven
Subject: FW: Creating Basic Income Security

From: dee clarke <deecclarke@survivorspeakusa.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2020 3:39 PM
To: Nadeau, Karen <Karen.Nadeau@legislature.maine.gov>
Subject: Creating Basic Income Security

This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

Please accept this is my testimony.

My name is Diane Clark I live in Portland Maine I am 63 years old.

I raised my three children working part time jobs, going to trade and certificate schools and receiving TaNF. My children and I had two experiences of being in the shelter. Between a mental breakdown and partial hospitalization where I was finally diagnosed with mental illness, I ended up receiving SSI.

It is because I had SSI, food stamps and Maine care I was able to raise my children, feed them fairly well and send them off to college.

Today, I receive a monthly cash benefit SSI and SDI totalling \$803. I also receive Food stamps and Mainecare. My Mainecare pays for all my prescriptions and rarely do I have a co-pay. Unfortunately, others who seem to be in the same boat, or even worse can not access either of them, and suffer a lot more in poverty. The main reason I am able to get by with this little cash benefit is because I live in a tax credit unit with a Section 8 voucher.

Cash benefits are an important resource for those in poverty. It's life-saving. But the benefit has to meet the demands of today's economy. I pinch pennies in every way possible to live off of \$803 a month. What would be more feasible for a single person would be 12 to \$1,500 a month.

Food is very expensive. And for those of us who have health issues and need to eat nutritionally balanced meals daily; spend a lot of money to do so. Unfortunate for me I still need food boxes for produce and proteins.

However this commission is to function study - you must consider real time, real life, not paper, statistics and data. The truth is in the person's living a life in poverty. The answers are in the person's surviving a life of poverty.

Thank you.

Dianne Clarke