

December 20, 2022

I am writing at the direct request of my mother-in-law, Jane T. McMurray who was born and raised in Farmington during the 1920s/30s. Jane is a veteran who served fellow Mainers as a hospital nurse for 35 years before retiring over 30 years ago, living alone for 45 of the past 60 years in the same simple home in Brunswick. This past weekend, Jane celebrated her 97th birthday and as her custom from October through March whenever her son/my husband and I arrive for our weekly visit, she asked for us to check the level on the furnace. No matter her physical hurdles and knee pain to remain independent in her beloved home, what is always top of mind this time of year is ensuring there is heat in her home. I know there are thousands of "Janes" right now in Maine who live almost if not entirely on social security and who just spent nearly \$1,000 more in past 3 months than a year ago on obtaining heating oil at 100 gallons at a time to keep their homes at 68 degrees...just 2 weeks ago, Jane spent \$660 for 100 gallons which she hopes will carry her through this month. That amount represents a whopping 33% of her monthly fixed income. While LD-3 cannot wave a magic wand and return prices to last year's (still high) levels, it most certainly offers immediate relief to elders like Jane in our state. Jane asks that you remember all those struggling to heat their homes right now and that you pass LD-3 without delay.

I, too, am a resident of Maine and as someone active in a faith community in Portland, also urge passage of LD-3 not only for the relief to all individuals and families hardest hit by home heating prices but also for the moral imperative to address the need for emergency rental assistance for our state's newest as well as longer-time residents. During this time of year, when multiple religious traditions light candles to signify hope in darkness, it is time to literally light a candle of temporary relief for the unhoused in the hope that sustainable, long term solutions can be enacted in the coming legislative session.

Kathy Strand of Portland
and Jane McMurray of Brunswick

Kathy Strand
Portland
LD 3

(in case file attachment doesn't come through....)

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