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Good afternoon and thank you Senator Jackson, Representative Talbot Ross, and Members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee for your time.

My name is Ebyn Moss. I have been on my own since I was 18. I am the first in my family to go to college and the first to complete Graduate School; achieving my childhood dream to be a therapist. Sparing you the details as to how I got here, I am now someone who is also Disabled and trying to do what I can to work part-time to cover my expenses. I am someone who likes to work and work hard. Most of the time I can get by, barely but I can. In times like these when prices soar and my income stays the same I am hugely impacted. I am also impacted by other situations like needing carpal tunnel surgery that means I can't work and don't have access to Paid Time Off. I do not have a 401K to fall back on, I do not have an Emergency fund to fall back on, I do not have extra money in my monthly budget to use in these situations to access, I do not have family to help me, I do not have access to family money that was handed down to me. I have not way to access more money.

Over the years I have helped elderly couples age in place instead of being institutionalized, I have grown food to address food insecurity, I have volunteered in organizations that support LGBTQ folks and more. I believe in the power of providing alternative resources and hope to people who face scarcity on a daily basis.

I ask the committee to reconsider the idea of scarcity and what we are prioritizing. Who are we as Mainers if many of us are still unable to meet our basic of needs like housing...heat...food while we are feeding, housing, and entertaining those who have an excess of resources. Who are we as Mainers when those with money create tax loopholes like a whack-a-mole game? Who are we as Mainers when we are sitting on our Rainy Day Fund as our people are cold and hungry? This scarcity narrative is based on protecting white wealth and not on what is right when it comes to a human rights model. Is this really who we want to be? Imagine, just imagine how we, as Mainers could be thriving as people and a State when our people are housed, warm and no longer hungry. Imagine how our fellow Mainers could thrive and create, invent, teach, build, and so much more...if they only had their basic needs met.

Thank you for your time and consideration.