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LD 3

My comments about LD3 are mixed:

Yes to keeping Mainers warm!

No to removing funding from the Home and Community based services (HCBS) waiver that serves Mainers with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). I am aware that the 35 million that is proposed to be taken from HCBS will be replaced by federal funds so the status quo disability funding will remain.

Maine's low status quo means people with I/DD are living on a growing waiting list at the level of risk of neglect and abuse. They are waiting year after year for a way to get their basic needs met. Others have services on paper that in reality cannot be adequately fulfilled because staff are not available. Others are living in housing with overworked staff, that are getting overtime but slowly draining and collapsing the housing support system. There will be over 70 group homes closures by the end of the year. Maine DHHS is reconfiguring the service system. But people with I/DD cannot reconfigure themselves to not need their basic needs. People with I/DD lose hard earned skills with only very short gaps of quality service. Therefore when people wait for services or are shuffled to find appropriate housing and program staffing, Maine pays a high price.

How much suffering is tolerable to our state when it comes to people living with I/DD? What constitutes a crisis?

Taking funding from another source that could help address the I/DD system of care workforce and waitlist crises is yet one more time that the needs of those with I/DD gets crossed off the priority list. My son lives in a group home and has severe autism. As we continue down the road of low status quo, and we continue to lose long standing service resources, what will Maine do with people like my son that cannot be cared for in a family home?

Keep people in Maine from shivering without heat.

Keep people with I/DD in Maine and their families from shivering in terror.

Kim Humphrey, Auburn, parent of Daniel, an HCBS