

# **Gary E. Plummer**

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Good Afternoon President Jackson, Speaker Ross and Honorable Members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs:

My name is Gary Plummer and I live in Windham, Maine. I am a former member of the Maine House and the Maine Senate. I am also a founding member of Windham Neighbors Helping Neighbors, along with Senator Bill Diamond and Representative Mary Bryant. I don't need to tell you about Windham Neighbors or our mission, since Representative Corey did an excellent job of that.

First, I thank you for bringing this issue and this bill forward for a public hearing. I always valued this process and truly appreciate the opportunity to participate.

I am here today to advocate for the portion of this bill that provides heating assistance to truly needy Maine residents. I am particularly concerned for elderly Mainers, who are finding it difficult to survive on a very limited fixed income. Windham Neighbors board members discussed this increased need during our July meeting. We doubled down on our fundraising efforts and our supporters responded with generous giving, but we know it will still not be enough to meet the needs of our citizens.

We also discussed our hope that the 130<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature would address this issue, but since that did not happen you are here today in the effort to get that work done.

With that said, I strongly urge you to work through the process and get fuel assistance to those who truly need this help.