

TESTIMONY OF JOHN ARCHARD IN SUPPORT OF

LD 111

Representative Tipping, Representative Roeder, members of the Labor and Housing Committee. My name is John Archard and I live in the Town of Vienna. I retired after serving 15 years as the State's first Tobacco Control Coordinator in the Attorney General's Office. I am testifying for LD111. I have been a member of the state retiree's association since retiring and am covered by the Maine Retirees Medicare Advantage Plan. I am in support of the proposal for the State to cover the additional Medicare Premium currently deducted from what I receive from Social Security. I currently suffer from Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis which is incurable but can be treated with a lung transplant. Because there is no lung transplant program in Maine, I have to travel to Boston for extensive testing to be considered for transplant. Just last week two trips were necessary. The Advantage plan does not cover the cost of travel for this testing which is significant. The added coverage of the Medicare premium would help defray such costs.

My wife is also a PERS Retiree as a former school librarian. She does not receive the State's Medicare Advantage plan but also has the Medicare premium deducted from her already significantly reduced social security due to the Government Pension Offset provision. I would caution that if passed adding the Medicare premium to her PERS allocation may adversely affect the already considerable Government Pension offset.

Thank you for your consideration and I urge you to vote for this legislation,