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Testimony in Support of LD 208: An Act Concerning Home Care Services

Greetings Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. I am Bridget Quinn, Associate State Director of Advocacy and Outreach for AARP Maine.

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. On behalf of our more than 200,000 members statewide, thank you for the opportunity to share testimony. Today, I am sharing testimony in support of LD 208: An Act Concerning Home Care Services.

Availability of home and community-based services (HCBS) is a critical part of Maine's long-term services and supports system. Long-term services and supports (LTSS) provide help with day-to-day tasks that support people with functional limitations and/or cognitive impairments.¹ HCBS is an umbrella term that includes a wide range of services that help people remain in their homes with the supports they need. Paid HCBS often complements the work family caregivers perform, which could also be considered HCBS.

AARP's 2021 Home and Community Preferences survey found that over three-quarters (77%) of adults aged 50 and older want to remain in their homes as they age.² In order to age in place many of Maine's older adults will need support from a loved one and/or to access HCBS services at some point. In fact, currently in Maine we have nearly 166,000 unpaid family caregivers who are already supporting a loved one and allowing them to remain at home, where they want to be.³

LD 208 directs the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a waiting list of individuals eligible for home care services. At AARP Maine we have heard stories and

¹ Edem Hado and Harriet Komisar, Long-Term Services and Supports (Washington, DC: AARP Public Policy Institute, August 2019), <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/ppi/2019/08/long-term-services-and-supports.doi.10.26419-2Fppi.00079.001.pdf>.

² Binette, Joanne. 2021 Home and Community Preference Survey: A National Survey of Adults Age 18-Plus. Washington, DC: AARP Research, November 2021. <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00479.001>

³ Reinhard, Susan C., Selena Caldera, Ari Houser, and Rita B. Choula. Valuing the Invaluable 2023 Update: Strengthening Supports for Family Caregivers. Washington, DC: AARP Public Policy Institute. March 8, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.26419/ppi.00082.006>

anecdotes from individuals who have told us they are eligible for services but are not receiving them. To fully understand and then address this issue Maine needs to understand how great the need is. LD 208 will provide a critical tool in understanding how many Mainers need service.

I urge the members of this Committee to support LD 208. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. If you have questions for me, I can be reached at bquinn@arp.org or at 207-272-8563.

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