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The immediate implications of the pay gap and how it impacts myself, my colleagues and my family directly relate to staff recruitment, staff retention and burnout. Currently in our office there are over 20 caseworker openings and there have been at least 2 staff members [including caseworkers, case aids, and supervisors] giving notice every week for the past 6-8 weeks. This has caused the remaining staff in our office to have to carry caseloads that are double the recommendations set forth by previous studies and internal reports. The current expectations are not realistic and are causing extreme burnout for the caseworkers who have not yet resigned. As of right now we have been told by higher ups that there are no potential new staff on the registrar, meaning that this job is not even sounding appealing to other outside individuals also meaning that there is no potential relief in sight for our office. Closing the pay gap would potentially entice other licensed social workers in the state of Maine to apply for positions in our office it would also reflect that there is a level of appreciation for caseworkers in the state of Maine who are serving our most vulnerable population in this state. It is insulting to do the work that we do, meet the demands that are placed on us, work the unrealistic amounts of overtime required to meet the deadlines for this job to ensure child safety while barely making more than entry level employees/cashiers at Target. This job requires caseworkers to often work late in order to see all of our children which means paying extra for childcare that falls outside of daycare hours and the current pay does not make that added demand feasible. In addition to all of this, the current reimbursement rate for travel is not equitable for the amount [mileage, oil changes and wear and tare] that we are required to travel with our personal vehicles, it is my understanding that the current rate of 46 cents per mile is also well below the federal reimbursement rate of 65 cents per mile.