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Commissioner



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January 24, 2024

Senator Joseph Baldacci, Chair
Representative Michele Meyer, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 2125 - *“An Act to Establish the Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias Advisory Council Within the Department of Health and Human Services and to Require a State Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias.”*

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information regarding LD 2125, *An Act to Establish the Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias Advisory Council Within the Department of Health and Human Services and to Require a State Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias*. While we support the intentions of this bill and are very pleased to be working with stakeholders on the initiatives described below, we are opposed to this legislation given ongoing work.

This bill requires the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) to create the Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias Advisory Council ("the council") to examine the needs of individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, the services available in the State for those individuals and the ability of health care providers and facilities to meet those individuals' current and future needs. The bill further directs that the council submit a State Alzheimer's disease and other dementias plan, and to report annually on the status of implementation of the plan, including any recommendations and a description of any barriers to implementation.

The Maine CDC, Division of Disease Prevention has a cooperative agreement with the US CDC establishing an Alzheimer's and Related Dementias Program and an associated Healthy Brain Initiative Stakeholder Group. Under the grant, the Stakeholder Group was established in November of 2019, has a diverse membership of over 100 members, and meets roughly two to three times per year. Subcommittees have been developed and aim to address six focus areas: Access to Care, Care Partners, Legal and Safety Issues, Public Awareness, Research and Data Collection, and Workforce Development and Training. Major activities of this group have included developing a State Plan for Alzheimer's and Related Dementias reviewing and providing feedback on a needs assessment, and developing implementation strategies for the State Plan.

The work required by this Advisory Council would duplicate existing work and require a position, and it is therefore not supported by DHHS.

Should the Committee be moving this bill forward, we encourage you to review the dates in the bill. For example, the bill requires a report in June 2024 but does not require appointments to the proposed panel before September 2024.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions during your deliberation of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Va', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Puthiery Va
Director
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
Maine Department of Health and Human Services