

February 26, 2024

Testimony in Opposition to LD 2214: An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025

Dear Senator Rotundo, Representative Sachs, Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and members of the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Health and Human Services,

My name is Dr. Erica Magnus and I live in Windham.

Along with 345,000 other Mainers, I am a Medicare beneficiary. I am lucky to be able to afford the healthcare I need, but I am well aware that many of my fellow beneficiaries are not as fortunate. Thousands of them rely upon Medicare Savings Programs (MSPs) to afford healthcare.

I am dismayed by the Governor's Supplemental Budget which proposes cuts to expansion of Maine's MSPs. Such cuts will swiftly undermine strong support of the programs passed by this legislature in 2023. Under the law passed in 2023, people 65+ with income up to \$27,681 would save \$7,300, and people with incomes between \$27,682 and \$36,450 would save \$2,000 on Medicare costs. The current proposed cuts to these vital programs will be nothing short of devastating to the tens of thousands of Mainers who need them. The state has alternatives, but at-risk seniors do not.

MSPs are benefit programs that help people with limited income and resources pay for some or all of their Medicare costs. For those who qualify, MSPs can help with out-of-pocket costs including premiums, copays, coinsurance, and deductibles. Enrollment in MSPs puts over \$2,000 back into the pockets of seniors and adults with disabilities each year. Rather than cutting the programs, the state should focus instead on increasing enrollment, thereby helping more low-income seniors afford their healthcare.

As it stands, I urge our state legislature to reject this Supplemental Budget that will have appalling results for those who can least absorb the proposed cuts to the MSPs.

Dr. Erica W. Magnus
Windham