



Submitted Testimony of Gerard Queally , President and CEO of Spectrum Generations, the Central Maine Area Agency on Aging, and a Managing Partner of Healthy Living for ME® (HL4ME®)

To the Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Health and Human Services Joint Standing Committee on LD 2214, HP 1420 *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.*

Honorable Senate Chairs Peggy Rotundo and Joe Baldacci and Honorable House Chairs Michelle Meyer and Melanie Sachs and all other Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committees on the Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Health and Human Services Committee,

I am Gerard Queally, President and CEO of Spectrum Generations, the Central Maine Area Agency on Aging and a Managing Partner of Healthy Living for ME® (HL4ME®), Maine's emerging Community Care Hub.

The purpose of my testimony is to request the 131st Legislature consider including LD 1684 – An Act to Invest in the Health and Wellness of Older Maine Residents by Expanding Coordinated Community Programming, in our states 2024 Supplemental Budget and if necessary to procure the funding, consider a funding sunset provision that would terminate the funding after 4 years.

As I testified in May 2023, I am in staunch support of LD 1684, "An Act to Invest in the Health and Wellness of Older Maine Residents by Expanding Coordinated Community Programming." . During the first Regular Session, this Committee was convinced that this proposed legislation was important, and it passed out of Committee unanimously. It was subsequently passed by the House and the Senate and placed on the special appropriations table pending passage to be enacted in concurrence. And that is where it ended; LD 1684 was not funded.

Today you have heard, or will be hearing, from my colleagues, other advocates for older adults, and community members about the pressing need for the services LD 1684 would provide. I am going to assume, based on your past votes, that you agree. Therefore, knowing that legislators are sometimes leery of committing funding in perpetuity for handcuffing future Legislatures , my testimony is going to focus on a potential fiscal solution that may make this funding more palatable.

Developing this capacity and capability within the five (5) Area Agencies on Aging will benefit not just Maine's aging and disability population, but the entire healthcare enterprise, including health systems, health plans, insurers (including Mainecare), vendors, and others. **All stakeholders are looking for statewide consistency in community-based service delivery that addresses the Social Determinates of Health and/or Health Related Social Needs (HRSN).**

By developing a consistent and common infrastructure capacity statewide, standardizing services, and person-centered planning and coordinated data sharing, this legislation will enable Maine's five (5) Area Agencies on Aging to be best positioned to contract seamlessly with health plans through a mechanism such as a Community Care Hub for future sustainability and not be dependent on the General Fund after 4 years.

Therefore, if long-term continuous funding of LD 1684 is the only reason to vote against this critical infrastructure improvement, I would then propose that funding be terminated no earlier than June 30, 2028. By then, the five (5) Area Agencies on Aging should have developed a capability and capacity to make the services under LD 1684 attractive to health systems, health plans, insurers (including Mainecare), vendors, and others.

I urge your continued support for this important legislation, and if needed, amend the fiscal note to ensure its passage in the state's Supplemental Budget or via the second Regular Session Appropriations process.

Thank you for your time and consideration.