



John F. Murphy Homes, Inc.

Testimony of Todd Goodwin, CEO, John F. Murphy Homes, Inc.

Neither For nor Against

L.D. 209, An Act to Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations from the General Fund and Other Funds for the Expenditures of State Government and to Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

January 23, 2025

Senator Rotundo, Senator Ingwersen, Representative Gattine, Representative Meyer, members of both the Appropriations and Financial Affairs and Health and Human Services Committees, my name is Todd Goodwin. I serve as Chief Executive Officer with John F. Murphy Homes, Inc.

I write today to urge your support and action in restoring and allocating within the supplemental budget the funding needed for making good on previous state promises to provide MaineCare service rate cost of living adjustments (COLAs) as called for in 22 M.R.S.A. §3173-J.

John F. Murphy Homes, Inc. is a nonprofit provider of disability services to both children and adults. We have been engaged in this work for nearly 50 years. While the bulk of our services are woven into the greater Lewiston Auburn area, we do stretch from Randolph through Brunswick to Saco.

Our continuum of services are funded under Sections 21, 28, 29, 50, 65 and 97 of MaineCare. They range from Home and Community-Based Settings (e.g., day supports, group homes, shared living) to Intermediate Care Facilities (e.g., nursing home) to eight special purpose private schools meeting the diverse educational and treatment needs of students pre-K through age 22. We employ approximately 900 people and serve 600+ Mainers with disabilities annually.

I was stunned to learn that, despite being called for in statute and despite all the celebratory rhetoric of very recent memory, the Governor's proposed supplemental budget does not include issuance of COLAs for MaineCare rates. Yet again, the old adage that has plagued our state's disability sector for years rings true; one step forward, two steps back. Yet again, those on the short end of the stick are the direct care workers we laud as critical to our state's safety net, as well as service recipients themselves who feel the detrimental effects of a broken care system in untold numbers of ways.

The impact on our organization alone translates to roughly \$1.8 million annually. There is much good that could be done with this figure that, unfortunately, will remain elusive should the

800 Center Street • Auburn, Maine 04210 • (207) 782-2726 • Fax (207) 782-1734
www.jfmhomes.org

legislature not restore this commitment. Examples include, but are by no means limited to, making health insurance more affordable to our lowest paid workers, bringing homes that we have sitting empty back on line to increase capacity for meeting need in the system and investing in quality assurance initiatives to heighten safeguards for our most vulnerable people.

COLAs were a promise to our state's direct care workforce. This group of people – thousands in number across our state– see the gap between rhetoric and reality. We can and should do better to break the pattern of broken promises.

Please restore the January 1, 2025 COLAs for all MaineCare rates in the supplemental budget.

Thank you for taking a moment to consider my testimony. Please feel free to reach out with any questions you may have.

Respectfully submitted,



Todd Goodwin, CEO
todd.goodwin@jfmh.org